

THE SKANDA-PURĀNA

PART XVIII

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS PUBLISHERS
PRIVATE LIMITED • DELHI

First Edition : Delhi, 1960

Also available at.

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS

41 U.A. Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110 007
8 Mahalaxmi Chamber, 22 Bhulabhai Desai Road, Mumbai 400 026
236, 9th Main III Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore 560 011
120 Royapettah High Road, Mylapore, Chennai 600 004
Sanas Plaza, 1302 Baji Rao Road, Pune 411 002
8 Camac Street, Kolkata 700 017
Ashok Rajpath, Patna 800 004
Chowk, Varanasi 221 001

Printed in India

BY JAINENDRA PRAKASH JAIN AT SHRI JAINENDRA PRESS,
A-45 NARAINA, PHASE-I, NEW DELHI 110 028
AND PUBLISHED BY NARENDRA PRAKASH JAIN FOR
MOTILAL BANARSIDASS PUBLISHERS PRIVATE LIMITED,
BUNGALOW ROAD, DELHI 110 007

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SKANDA PURĀNA

Book VI: NĀGARA KHANDA

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYEIGHT

The Groups of Mothers Cursed

Sūta said:

1-2. Afterwards when the fifth day dawned, those excellent Brāhmaṇas remained pure and clean after their excellent ablutions and were clad in their white, well-washed garments. They went to the centre of the assembly. As instructed by Pulastya, they ritualistically summoned the Ṛtviks and performed all the rites.

3. When the sacred fire was kindled for the performance of Homa by the Ṛtviks with the greatest concentration, they uttered in due order the *Praṇa Mantras* (those uttered at the time of the crushing and squeezing of Soma) as commanded by the Aadhvaryu.

4. At this same time, the Udgātṛ proceeded with the rite indicated by the singing of the Sāman passages and usually performed with the Śaṅkus (posts).

5. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the Udgātṛ came to the centre of the assembly seven times and here all the Devas eager to partake of their share in the Yajña gathered together.

6. They came joyously especially for the sake of imbibing Soma. The Udgātṛ began the song and the imbibing of the Soma started.

7. A certain girl came there eager to hear the Sāman songs. She wished to observe cleverly the wonderful way in which the Śaṅku (the rod that crushes Soma) was moved about.

8. She was the excellent daughter of the Chandoga (reciter of the Sāman Mantras) named Devaśarman. Her name was Audumbarī. She was very eager to listen to the Sāman songs.

9-10. She spoke these words to the Udgātṛ in the assembly itself: "As the Śaṅku begins to move according to the indication of the Sāman songs, perform the Homa in the manner

mentioned in the fire called Dakṣiṇa. Thereby alone you will be rid of sins. If not, the Yajña becomes futile."

11. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, on hearing her words that contained a special hint, he pondered over the words uttered by her.

12. Then the Udgātṛ was surprised. He asked the girl: "From where have you come? Whose daughter are you? Tell me."

Audumbarī said:

13. (Originally) I was the daughter of Parvata (a Gandharva) (Now) I am the well-known daughter of Devaśarman. O highly esteemed one. I have come over here from the Gandharva world and I can remember the events of previous births.

Udgātṛ said:

14. Of which Gandharva are you the daughter, O my dear girl? By whom were you cursed? When will you be rid of the human state? Narrate everything.

Audumbarī said:

15. The two Gandharvas, Nārada and Parvata, are known to all the people. I was the daughter of Parvata and cursed by Nārada.

16. When I saw him, the excellent sage was playing on his lute in a carefree way. I was not conversant with the particular Mūrchanā and the Tāna arising therefrom as he played and so I laughed derisively. That made a wrong note in the Tāna.

17-18. Thereupon, the excellent Brahmana became angry and cursed me: "I have been laughed at derisively without any reason. Hence, you deserve this curse. What you did is the way of human beings. Hence, you become a human being."

Then that leading sage was pacified by me along with my father:

19-20a. "O Lord, do lay down the limit of the period of the curse. I was very childish, no doubt. Yet, O Lord, let my birth as a human being be in an excellent family, at a good holy place. Let the death too occur at a good place in the house of a Brāhmaṇa."

20b-23. Thereupon, I was told by him: "O splendid lady, in Camatkārapura there is a leading Brāhmaṇa of a noble family named Devaśarman. He is a master of all the Śāstras. His wife is a well-known Brāhmaṇa lady named Satyabhāmā. Enter her womb for your human birth. At the time when Pitāmaha performs a Yajña in that holy spot there shall be the turn of the Udgātr and he may place the Śaṅku wrongly. Then he should be told by you, 'The Śaṅku has been placed wrongly.' You shall do this in the assembly of all the Devas. Your release (from the curse) shall take effect then."

24. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, look at this divine refulgent body of mine. See that the aerial chariot too sent by my father has come.

Udgātr said:

25. O lady of wide eyes, you have prevented an obstacle to this Yajña. Visiting me shall not go in vain especially in a rite concerning the gods. Hence, O Audumbarī, choose a boon from me.

Audumbarī said:

26. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, if you are pleased and wish to grant me a boon, do grant it in the presence of all the Devas.

27. From now onwards if anyone performs a Yajña on the earth, an idol resembling me should be kept in the middle of the assembly.

28. Then the movement of the Śaṅku should be made before me. If that is done, I shall be pleased even as I stay in my heavenly abode.

Sūta said:

29-31. On hearing her words the Udgātr said to her: "Henceforth whoever wishes to perform a Yajña here shall install her (that idol) in the middle of the assembly, adore it with unguents, garments, ornaments, sweet scents, flowers and then move the Śaṅku in front of the image. This statement is made by me in the assembly of all the Devas.

32-34. No good shall happen to you otherwise. Do attain the greatest joy. O fair lady, if anyone performs the rite in

the assembly without you, all that shall be futile as though one has performed the Homa in ashes.

If any woman adores you in the center of the assembly by means of fruits, her welfare shall be crore-times more on each of the fruits. All the quarters shall be fruitful undoubtedly.

35. If she offers you garments, ornaments, flowers, incense etc. all those things shall have a crore-time more benefit.

36. But wait. Do not get into the aerial chariot. O goddess, with some end in view, I shall perform your worship."

The Devas said:

37. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, proper words have been uttered by you. At our instance too this shall be true.

Sūta said:

38. That goddess who was asked by the Udgātr to wait, stayed in the firmament, still carried by the aerial chariot.

39-40. At the same time the daughter of Devaśarman became a goddess, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. All the women within the city came there out of curiosity, desirous of seeing her. Some had brought fruits with devotion and some garments. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, she was duly adored by all of them.

41. On hearing the news of his daughter, Devaśarman too joyously came there along with his wife. His eyes beamed with wonder.

42. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, when he too paid homage to her along with his wife, he was prevented by her who said thus:

43-44. "O father, father, do not bow down to me along with my mother. My acquisition of the heavenly goal will get endangered.

O my holy Lord, stay here with your wife for the whole of the day. After requesting the excellent Suras for that purpose, I shall go to the heavenly abode taking you along with your wife with this self-same physical body."

45. Then, the parents became delighted. They stayed there observing the adoration of their daughter by the people. They considered themselves superior to all embodied beings.

46. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, all her kinsmen praised the girl and waited near her.

47. In the meantime, Bhṛgu came out of the assembly to the place where Pitāmaha was present and spoke to him with palms joined in reverence:

48-49. "O Lord, the Udgātṛ has deviated from the Śruti-prescribed procedure by keeping a girl in the middle of the assembly, O Lord of Suras.

In the presence of the Suras, he has announced the divinity of that Nāgara woman (by saying). 'We shall drink the Soma juice there along with her.'"

50. Then Vidhi summoned him and asked him thus, O excellent Brāhmaṇas: "Who is this girl? Why was she kept in the middle of the assembly by you?"

51-53. He said: "She is a Gandharvī who had fallen down on account of a curse. She was born in a Brāhmaṇa household. Her liberation from the curse was proclaimed at the Yajña of Vidhi by Nārada earlier. O Lord, he had cursed her angrily but I was satisfied and granted the boon now. The movement of the Śaṅku will never be beyond your ken. O Prapitāmaha, she has been duly glorified by all the Devas."

54-55. In the meantime, on hearing the glory of Audumbarī on the earth in the sacrifice performed by Pitāmaha at the sacred-most Kṣetra of Hātakeśvara, the delighted Mātṛs came there from Kailāsa for the sake of worshipping.

56-57. The Mothers too who number sixty-eight and who are adored by Gandharvas, Siddhas, Sādhyas and groups of Maruts also came there. They had several forms which caused wonder and dismay in the world. Others also came dancing, laughing and singing.

58. On hearing the uproar all the Devas, including Vāsava with Brahmā and Viṣṇu as their leaders became highly surprised.

59. "What is this?" said they and rose up from the Yajña pavilion. In the meantime, all (the Mātṛgaṇas) came there where the Lotus-born Lord was present.

60-65a. Lowering their head, they bowed down joyously and spoke respectfully: 'We have come thus on hearing about your excellent Yajñā. O Lord of Devas, we have been invited by Vāyu, the very life of the universe. But we have no

authorized share in the Yajña rites. Therefore, O Lotus-born One, we did not come on the earlier days. But on hearing about Audumbarī of unprecedented (fame) we have gathered here.

Since she was the daughter of the noble-souled Parvata, we met her and adored her with due obeisance. She grants all desires unto women. She has been glorified by all the Devas. O Lord Prapitāmaha, do show our seats. Our group numbers sixty-eight.

65bc. The Lotus-born Lord heard it and recollected how limited the Yajña pavilion was and how it was already filled by the group of the Devas numbering thirty-three.

66. Then, Pitāmaha summoned the *Madhyaga* hailing from the Nāgara community. He was accomplished in Vedic study. He was another Bṛhaspati as it were. He (Brahmā) abandoned the vow of silence and spoke to the *Madhyaga* in gentle and polished words:

67-69. "Do go and tell the Nāgara Brāhmaṇas on my behalf, especially the leaders of the Gotras numbering sixty-eight: 'These Mothers have come and they number sixty-eight, a matching number of one for one. Each of them should give a seat in his own respective plot of land. O Nāgaras, this assistance should be extended to me by you all. This great favour on your part shall make them delighted.'

70. He hastened thither and summoned the Nāgaras. He humbly bowed down to them and spoke (as instructed).

71. On listening to it, all the Nāgaras became glad. Each of them gave the Mātṛs his own seat.

72. Then all the Mothers bowed down to Pitāmaha and then to Gāyatrī with due devotion.

73. All of them settled in the seats indicated by the Brāhmaṇas. They were adored and propitiated through various kinds of *balis* (offerings).

74. On being propitiated by the leading Brāhmaṇas they were delighted. They began to sing, laugh and dance. Thereafter they said:

75-76a. "We will not go to any other place. We will stay here itself always, where such devout leading Brāhmaṇas are present. And such a fine place is the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara."

76b. At the same time Sāvitrī happened to come there.

77-78. All the Brāhmaṇas bowed to her but when she

proceeded ahead they stopped her: "O Sāvitrī who are beloved of your husband, do not go to the *Devayajana* (the place of the Yajña unto the Devas). The excellent lady Gāyatrī has been taken as wife by Brahmā."

79. On hearing those words, Sāvitrī became distressed. Due to confusion her eyes began to roll with tears welling up and agitating them.

80. She saw (the Mothers) dancing, singing, leaping and jumping on the ground with great delight.

81-84. Then Sāvitrī cursed them in stuttering convulsive words choked with tears: "You have adored my co-wife and occupied this place. You did not bow down to me. So, you shall be distressed even as I am distressed. You will never go to another place. Nāgaras too will never be adored? You will never get a palace erected at any time. You will undergo suffering due to coldness in winter, through hot rays in summer season and due to water in rainy season."

85. After saying this, the goddess settled there itself surrounded by all the Nāgara women.

86-87. Good ladies addressed her always with gestures (of good will).

At the same time, the Hot-rayed Lord (Sun) set. There was great noise and shouting in the Yajña pavilion as the Brāhmaṇas engaged in the Yajña rites discussed the scriptures.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYNINE

The Antecedents of Audumbarī

Sūta said:

1-3. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, after the Mothers had been cursed by Sāvitrī, Gandharvīs came to the place where she (Audumbarī) was present.

After bowing down to her, they spoke these piteous words: "O goddess, we came to your Makha thinking that with Audumbarī's favour we shall get a share in the Yajña offerings. It was not known to us that Sāvitrī was present here.

4. She was much distressed by the misfortune and was

surrounded by the Nāgara women.

It is a happy way with us to dance and to sing.

5. O foremost one among Gandharvis, we were doing the very same at night and so were cursed: 'All women become distressed on seeing the distress of fellow-women (but you were not distressed at my grief).'

6-7. You were delighted in the festival of my co-wife. You bowed down to her and adored her but did not even talk to me. You started unusual dancing and singing before me. Hence, you will not have the power to move through the sky.

8. Men will not adore you. You will remain in this spot perpetually distressed without a support (or roof over you).

9. In the rites connected with pilgrimage of the indigent and the distressed you will always remain, but men will not adore you.' O goddess, those words of hers cannot become untrue.

10. (We thought) 'Let us go to adore Audumbarī and tell her this incident. She will remove our misery certainly. She is indeed the bestower of all desires.'

11. Having lost our hope otherwise, we have therefore, come here suddenly.'

12. Hence, O lady granting welfare, do something so that we will have the power of movement. Your greatness will become enhanced in all the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings."

Audumbarī said:

13. What power do we have to alter what is brought about by Sāvitrī even with the help of all Suras and Asuras?

14. Still I shall endeavour, O fair ladies, to the extent of my power for your welfare. You have been entrusted to the Brāhmaṇas of sixty-eight Gotras.

15. Pitāmaha who was pleased has done so and you will get due honour there. At night you can indicate the same by means of your laughter.

16-19. From now onwards you can become satisfied through the following means: If there is a grand festival (such as sacred thread ceremony or marriage etc.) in the house of any of the Nāgaras for which they will erect a pavilion, so also if women come to the city gate and offer Bali after due meditation

without noticing (your) laughter, the satisfaction you thus receive will be like that of the Devas through Makhas.

If any women do not perform the adoration cited by me unto you all, in that city, their sons will perish. By insulting you, they will always be sickly.

20. Hence stay here itself for according protection to the city. Under the guise of a curse, this has become a boon unto you all.

21. In the meantime, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Devaśarman who came there along with his wife became the Gandharva named Parvata.

22. When Audumbarī had been cursed by the angry celestial sage Nārada saying "Be a human girl", he was requested by her thus:

23-24a. "O father, become a human being for my sake along with her (my mother) and procreate me as a human girl so that I can avert (being within the human womb). The womb is defiled by faeces and urine. It is full of all defects."

24b. Thereupon, out of pity, the excellent wife of Devaśarman (descended).

25. The Gandharva descended on the earth and was in the Vānaprastha stage (when Audumbarī was born).

Thus, O excellent ones, the fifth night of the Yajña passed off.

26-27a. There was charming festivity though there was a disturbance from Audumbarī. When it dawned and she was sent off, Audumbarī said to her father Parvata:

27b-30. "In the morning, there shall be the Avabhṛtha (valedictory bath) pertaining to the Yajña of Vidhi. There shall be the presence of all the Tirthas therein. We can also have our bath therein. Then we shall go home along with all the Devas.

We three shall go in this serial chariot happily. Actually, the curse of Nārada has been a blessing to me because I got a Devas. It was obtained on the full-moon day as offered by the womenfolk."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETY

Origin of Yakṣma Tirtha

Sūta said:

1-3. Thus, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, that Kratu lasted for five days in the holy place of Hātakeśvara with everything desirable achieved in plenty.

The Brāhmaṇas, mendicants, distressed ones, blind ones and the Ṛtviks were fully propitiated with Dakṣiṇā. At the conclusion of the Yajña (Brahmā) summoned the excellent Nāgara Brāhmaṇas well-versed in all the four Vedas and experts in both Śrūti and Smṛti.

4-8. With palms joined in reverence, he spoke to them respectfully: "O excellent Brāhmaṇas, afraid of the Kali Age, a second Puṣkara has been established by me with the favour of Lord Hātakeśvara on the earth so that it will not be destroyed by the attack of Mlecchas.

At the advent of the Kali Age, Prayāga and all other Tirthas and shrines are undoubtedly defiled by Mlecchas. That was why this Yajña has been performed by me.

Hence tell me, what gift shall I offer to you by way of cost of your plots of land. O Brāhmaṇas, thereby I can obtain the benefit of the Yajña."

The Brāhmaṇas said:

9. If you are ready to offer to us the Dakṣiṇā due for the Yajña, then make our holy spot sacred by residing here yourself.

10. O Pitāmaha, O most excellent one among Suras, tell us the greatness of the excellent Tirtha named Puṣkara established by you here so that we can perform the rites of ablution etc.

Brahmā said:

11-12. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, has not it been heard by you in the Purāṇas that this Tirtha perpetually set up in the firmament is created by me?

Naimiṣa is specifically set up on the earth, Puṣkara in the firmament and Kurukṣetra in all the three worlds.

13. Undoubtedly, urged by my words, all these three will come down to the earth for five days.

14. This period beginning from the eleventh lunar day in the bright half of the month of Kārtika till the fifteenth day (Full-moon day) is destructive of all sins.

15. If anyone performs the ablution or Śrāddha rite with due faith during those five days that shall have everlasting benefit.

16. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, I shall come from Brahmaloka and resort to this Tirtha during these five days.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

17. O Prapitāmaha, we shall install your image in this holy spot. O Lord, pass into it and stay permanently.

18. Let the Tirtha come here from the sky forever for the purpose of destroying the sins of the people. It behoves you to do so.

19. This is the Dakṣiṇā, O Lord, due for the Yajña.

20. O excellent one among Suras, if it is done so your Kratu shall be fruitful and your promise for making the gift shall become truthfully fulfilled.

Śrī Brahmā said:

21. On being invoked through the Mantras, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the sacred Puṣkara shall arrive at the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara.

22-23. A devotee should repeat the Aghamarṣaṇa Mantra standing in water before my image. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, he should then repeat the four *Savana* Mantras beginning with Paila Mantra. Arriving here from Brahmaloka, I shall listen to it.

Sūta said:

24. Then all those Nāgaras gave the *Anujñā* (formal permission to conclude) after handing over the flowers so that the benefit of the Yajña could be obtained.

25. In the meantime Pulastya, the excellent Adhvaryu, came to the place where Brahmā was present surrounded by the Nāgaras.

26. He said: "Your Yajña has been concluded with the full complement of the Dakṣiṇās but without the *Prāyaścitta* (expiatory) rites unlike that of any other devotee.

27. Hereafter, O Pitāmaha, a couple of rites still remain, namely Vāruṇeṣṭi and Japa. I shall perform it now.

28. Further, the valedictory bath should be performed together with you. So get up, we shall go to the place where there is the arrangement for water.

29. Thereby, we shall perform the Vāruṇī Iṣṭi through qualified Brāhmaṇas. They are four in number including me beginning with Brahmā. The Āgnīdhra and Hotṛ are the others.

30. As in the fire so in the water the auspicious rite is to be performed with Mantras. The Homa is performed in accordance with the injunctions along with the Yajña utensils.

31. For pleasing Varuṇa and to suppress all disasters, the holy bath should be taken by you accompanied by the Ṛtviks.

32. Any other man who takes his bath at that time along with you shall become free from sins.

33. All the Tīrthas existing in all the three worlds consisting of the mobile and immobile beings come near it at the time of Vāruṇī Iṣṭi.

34. Hence, all the followers should assiduously take bath in the water along with the *Dikṣita* (one initiated) in the festivity connected with Avabhṛtha, whether these participants are Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas or Vaiśyas.

35. Hence, send now these Brāhmaṇas too. They too will take their bath there along with you."

Sūta said:

36. On hearing it, Brahmā started towards the splendid shore of the Jyeṣṭhakuṇḍa. He was pleased and contented. He was accompanied by Gāyatrī.

37. Then, on bearing his words, all the Suras and Brāhmaṇas and Pulastya started with the intention of taking the ablution to get the auspicious benefit along with Brahmā. They were accompanied by their sons and wives. They were joyous.

38. (Due to the limitedness of space of the Tīrtha) a great confusion was caused at Jyeṣṭha Puṣkara by people who had come there for bath with their hands raised up.

39. Neither Brahmā nor the Vāruṇa rite could be perceived there as the entire ground was covered by the Brāhmaṇas performing the rite.

40. Then at the end of the rite, Brahmā said to Śatakratu who was modestly standing nearby What he said was for the sake of the welfare of all the world:

41. "The people have come for bathing from far away and as there is great rush of people at the waterfront, they will not be able to see me taking a plunge into the meritorious waters.

42. Hence climb on to your elephant, O Slayer of Vṛtra, Place the skin (hide) of Eṇa or Kṛṣṇasāra at the tip of a bamboo.

43. At the time of the bath, you must cast it down into the water so that all the people may know the exact time for bathing.

44. Everyone who has come, whether he is old or a mere child, if he stands far away, can take bath and obtain the benefit cited as the result of the bath even by seeing it."

Sūta said:

45. Hari (Indra) said, "So it shall be done", and hastened thereto.

46. Then he stood in the middle of the water riding on the elephant and holding in his hand the bamboo staff at the tip of which there was the antelope skin.

47. At the conclusion of this rite, when Pitāmaha was about to take his bath, Śatakratu himself cast that skin into the water.

48. In the meantime, all the Devas, Gandharvas, Guhyakas and human beings took their bath with great concentration.

49. In the meantime, Brahmā respectfully (eagerly) spoke to Śakra who had taken his bath along with the Suras and who stood near him modestly:

Brahmā said:

50. O Thousand-eyed One, you have painfully exerted yourself much in my Makha. Gāyatrī, the slender-waisted wife, was brought (by you).

51. Hence, choose your boon. I shall grant you everything even if it be very rare to be obtained. Welfare unto you.

Indra said:

52. O Lord, if you are pleased with me, if a boon has to be granted to me, O Lord, let what I request for, be so.

53. Every year when this auspicious day arrives, the king should hold a bamboo staff with antelope-skin piece. He will be free from sins.

54. O Pitāmaha, he shall ride on an excellent elephant like me. He should then throw the antelope-skin piece. He will be free from sins.

55. He will be devoid of all vices and be invincible to enemies. The people who take their bath along with this piece of antelope-skin, shall be sinless.

56. The other people too, even if they are sinful, shall get the sins incurred in the course of a year destroyed.

Brahmā said:

57. O Thousand-eyed One, everything mentioned by you shall undoubtedly take effect. All these are as good as mentioned by me.

58-59. A king born in this land of Ānarta should ride on an elephant with great faith. He should throw the antelope-skin piece into this Kuṇḍa of mine after worshipping (my image) situated on the bank, for the welfare of all the worlds, on the first lunar day.

60. The *Kutapa* period (eighth Muhūrta) should have been over then and the second lunar day should have come after the Kārttikī is over.

61. Men who take their bath at that time here itself shall be rid of the sins of a year. Undoubtedly they will be freed from ailments and mental anguish.

Sūta said:

62. In the meantime, a terribly fell disease named Yakṣman (Tuberculosis) spread there. Even the Devas and Dhanvantari too could not cure it.

63. He was clad in blue clothes. He was lean and wretched in appearance. He had the support of a staff. With Śleṣman (phlegm) he coughed. He put forward his foot-step with very great difficulty.

64. After bowing he spoke these words:

Yakṣman said:

65. O Pitāmaha, I heard about your Yajña from very far. With very great difficulty, I have come here with my throat parched through hunger.

66. I was created by Dakṣa formerly, when he became angry with Candra who resorted only to Rohiṇī (one of his daughters) to the exclusion of other daughters (of Dakṣa).

67. Then Candra propitiated Maheśvara at whose bidding one fortnight was assigned to me to swallow and taste him (Candra).

68-70. I do not have anything in the other fortnight whereby I can become satisfied. In every Yajña, the householder shall propitiate the excellent Brāhmaṇa. The Brāhmaṇa should utter "I am propitiated" and the householder should hear it doubtlessly. O Lord, that should be on the Full-moon day when the entire Yajña is concluded. If the Brāhmaṇa does not say "I have been propitiated" at the conclusion of the Yajña, the Yajña will be futile for him, even if a crore times more is given with great faith.

71. This, O Lord, you must have heard recited in the Śruti. Hence, when the Yajña is properly finished the Brāhmaṇas should be propitiated.

72. O Suraśreṣṭha (foremost among Suras), my satisfaction will result only through cooked food with your favour. Kindly employ some means whereby it shall take effect.

Sūta said:

73. On hearing all his entirely wholesome words holding Śruti as authority, the Lotus-born Lord spoke these words:

74-76. "From now onwards all the Brāhmaṇas on the earth who maintain sacrificial fires, should offer a Bali (of rice) at the end of Vaiśvadeva.

They must make offering to you after giving to the other Devas. Thereby you will become satisfied in the second fortnight. It is the truth that has been mentioned by me.

If the Brāhmaṇas offer Bali at the conclusion of Vaiśvadeva, you must not cling to anyone in his family."

Yakṣman said:

77. O Lord, I shall always stay in your Tirtha performing penance if only you command (permit) me.

Brahmā said:

78. If it has to be so, you request these Brāhmaṇas, in the manner I had requested them for the sake of the Yajña. You can get a plot of land you may like. Thereon you do build your hermitage.

Sūta said:

79. On hearing it, he requested the residents of Camatkārapura. After receiving a plot of land from them he built his own hermitage.

80. He who takes his bath on the first lunar day coinciding with a Sunday, shall be rid of tuberculosis if he is assailed by it.

81-82. Even today there is a proof of this in the case of those who preserve the sacred fires and the Nāgaras in particular. Even in the Kali Age, Yakṣman does not assail them or cattle staying in their house. There is no other remedy for it—neither medicine nor Mantras nor physicians.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYONE

Occurrence of Evil Omens

The sages said:

1-3. O Sūtaputra, It has been said by you that Sāvitrī did not come there though called by Pulastya with words deceptive in intention. She became engaged in domestic chores.

Then Gāyatrī was summoned by Brahmā angrily. She was praised very much by the Devas and Brāhmaṇas. She then became his wife.

What happened to Sāvitrī after knowing that she entered the Patnīśālā in the Yajñamaṇḍapa? Tell everything in detail.

Sūta said:

4. Sāvitrī thought her husband to be under her control and so was complacent. Steadying herself she fetched the wives of all the Devas.

5-6. They were Gaurī, Lakṣmī, Śacī, Medhā, Arundhatī, Svadhā, Svāhā, Kīrti, Buddhi, Puṣṭi, Kṣamā, Dhṛtī and many others accompanied by celestial damsels. Ghṛtācī, Menakā, Rāmbhā, Urvaśī, Tilottamā, all the groups of celestial damsels came there, O excellent Brāhmaṇas.

7. Accompanied by all of them who were delighted in their minds and whose hands were full (with fruits, presents etc.) she started towards the pavilion.

8. The musical instruments were played to the accompaniment of singing by leading Gandharvas and Kinnaras.

9. That lady of great esteem went as far as the Yajña pavilion. By that time her right eye began to throb frequently.

10. The beasts, the birds etc., flew and moved about anti-clockwise. They moved backwards frequently making all sorts of noises.

11. The right limbs throbbing frequently agitated her mind continuously.

12. But all the celestial women continued to dance and laugh and sing enthusiastically at her sides.

13-14. They were not aware of the excitement in the heart (of Sāvitrī) as a result of the ill omens.. All of them were

engaged in singing and dancing vying with one another. They went ahead saying "I will enter first; I will enter first in the great Makha." They were too enthusiastic.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYTWO

Greatness of Sāvitṛī

Sūta said:

1-3. On hearing the loud report of the musical instruments approaching, Nārada knew that it was his own mother. So he came face to face with her.

He was extremely distressed and completely drenched in tears. His words were choked in his throat due to tears. He bowed down and spoke falteringly. Standing before the celestial ladies, the Brāhmaṇa who was fond of quarrels wanted to increase her anger but at the same time wanted to save himself from being cursed.

4. Though he faltered at every word, his voice was as majestic as the rumbling of a cloud: "O goddess, you were invited by me and also by Pulastya thereafter.

5. But due to the predominance of natural womanly procrastination you did not come even at the time of the initiation (to the sacrifice).

6. Then at the behest of Vidhi, another woman was brought by Śakra, a virgin hailing from a cowherd community but having the exquisite divine form.

7. She was forced into the mouth of a cow, O highly esteemed lady, and immediately pulled through the anus. Soon she was brought here.

8. Then she was approved by Viṣṇu for the rite of marriage. Imitating your name, the name Gāyatrī was given to her by Īśvara.

9. 'Let her be a Brāhmaṇa lady.' So declared all the Brāhmaṇas and said, 'O Lord Brahmā, grasp her hand (in marriage).'

10. So said all the Devas too. Then (Brahmā) immediately

employed her with all the duties of a 'Patni' (wife at the side of the person performing Yajña).

11. Why should there be too much of talk? She came into the Patniśālā (the inner chamber of Yajña). The sacred Raśanā (girdle) was tied round the waist of that cowherd-lass, O goddess of Suras.

12. On seeing this censurable activity, I could not tolerate it at all. I was unable to see her. I came out of the Yajña pavilion.

13. O highly esteemed lady, now that you have come to know of this, do what suits this occasion. Either go away or stay in that pavilion devoid of piety."

14. On hearing it, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Goddess Sāvitrī's face became pallid like a lotus-pond when snow begins to fall.

15. She resembled a creeper the root of which has been cut, a ruddy goose separated from her loving mate or like a dried lake at the advent of the bright summer season.

16. She was like a digit of the waning moon or like a hind bereft of her stag, or like an army with the king killed or like a chaste lady whose husband has gone away.

17. Further, she was like a garland of flowers that has faded or a mother cow with the calf dead. On seeing her sitting motionless in an absent-minded state, the wives of the Devas said to Nārada:

18. "Fie upon you, O (Sage) fond of quarrels! You cause estrangement where there is affectionate intimacy! The change in the (behaviour) of Vidhi has been wholly brought about by you."

Gaurī said:

19. O goddess, he is very fond of quarrels and speaks half truths and half lies. This sage sustains his life only through this type of activity always.

20. O Sāvitrī, I was repeatedly warned beforehand by the Three-eyed Lord: "O dear Pārvatī, if you desire that I should be happy, you must not pay heed to the words of Nārada at all."

21. Ever since then I have not given any credence to his words at all. Hence, let us go where your husband is present.

22. Only after seeing for ourselves all the matter on hand

we should do what is befitting. We must not tarry here merely because he says so. We shall go there.

Sūta said:

23-26. On hearing the words of Gaurī, Sāvitrī lost all delight, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. Her mind was void as it were. She proceeded towards the Yajña pavilion faltering at every step.

Even sweet music appeared jarring to her ears as it came continuously, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. The sound of the instruments of music like Mṛdaṅga, Ānaka etc. appeared like a barren, discordant note.

While she proceeded to the place of Yajña the great chaste lady could not bear to see the human concourse. It appeared as though she was looking at corpses.

27. She thought of the various articles of make-up on her body as though they were burning charcoal. Thus the great chaste lady went along in greater distress with her eyes filled with tears.

28. With very great difficulty she reached the Yajña pavilion that fell within the range of her sight. It appeared to her as a prison house very repulsive to look at.

29. Seeing that Sāvitrī had reached the Yajña pavilion the Four-faced Lord stood immediately with face turned down due to shame.

30. Same was the plight of Śambhu, Śakra, Vāsudeva and all other Devas who happened to be in that Yajña pavilion.

31. The tiger-like (eminent) Brāhmaṇas stopped their Vedic chant abruptly. They were so frightened that they remained perfectly dumb.

32. Seeing her husband in the company of her co-wife, Sāvitrī became furious with the eyes turned red. She spoke these harsh words:

Sāvitrī said:

33. O you wretch of senile features, is it proper on your part that you should get a cowherdlass as your wife?

34. On both the sides (paternal and maternal) of that girl, the women have anyone they fancied as their husbands. They

have cast off their cleanliness and decorum. They are averse to righteous activities .

35-38. All the people in her family became enthusiastically happy in brutish way of sexual indulgence and dalliance. The men carnally approach all other women except perhaps their uterine sisters and mothers.

Just as animals go on grazing and chewing grass and drinking water, passing urine and discarding dung and meekly bearing burdens, so also the whole set of her family knows nothing except imbibing buttermilk to fill their belly. Evacuating the bowels and emptying their bladders is their sole duty without any superior enjoyment, in the course of their lives. They have no other duty except concern for their bellies.

39. Such despicable activities as even Śūdras eschew, these Ābhīras do not hesitate to carry on. What is it that you have done now!

40-42. If at all you had the necessity of another wife in the course of the Yajña, why was not a Brāhmaṇa lady well-known in all the three worlds married by you? O Vidhi, I consider you a bald-headed useless person of roguish propensities, since you took a Cowherd-lass for wife, whose virginity has been defiled, who has already been enjoyed earlier by many, who is extremely sinful excelling even a hundred harlots!

43. A girl with ruptured hymen becomes a Śūdra woman. Any of the Cowherd-lasses also becomes so.

44. Such a woman (bride) will cause the downfall of the ancestors on her mother's, father's and father-in-law's sides by this despicable deed on the earth.

45. If at all I have any truth (Rta) left with me, I aver that on account of this sinful act you and the other Devas will never get any honoured adoration.

46. Those who adore (you) will become poverty-stricken. How is it that you are not at all ashamed to do this despicable deed?

47. What you have committed is something not proper to your sons, grandsons and the other heaven-dwellers as well as Brāhmaṇas.

48. Or, perhaps this is not your fault. Men subject to the control of Kāma are shameless. They do not know what should be done and what should not be done, what is auspicious and what is not auspicious.

49. A man under the influence of Kama considers what should not be done as his duty. He considers his friend as his enemy and vice versa.

50. Just as there is no honesty in a gamester, no fraternity in a thief and there is no (real) friend to a king, so also there is no sense of shame in lustful men.

51. Even fire may get cool. The moon may become fiery and the briny sea may become sweet in taste, but certainly a lustful man does not feel ashamed.

52. I do not feel distressed that I have to put up with a co-wife. Thousands of men and women do have it.

53. If you are that lustful, you marry other noble ladies of purity and belonging to your caste.

54. This is the most painful grief that an Ābhīrī who is as much censured as a harlot, has given up feminine modesty and has many husbands, has been married by you.

55. Hence, O Vidhi, I shall go to that place where even your name is never heard, because you are greedy and lustful as well as bereft of shame.

56. O Vidhi, after fetching me here, I have been ridiculed by you in front of the wives of Devas, Devas and Brāhmaṇas. So, no one will perform your worship now.

57-58. From now onwards, if any man on the earth worships you in a temple with or without Mantras as in the case of other heaven-dwellers, his lineage will become destitute and miserable, whether he is a Brāhmaṇa or a Kṣatriya, a Vaiśya or a Śūdra.

59. Since this despised daughter of an Ābhīra has been put in my place, she will never raise a family as per my words.

60. She will never be offered worship as in the case of other goddesses.

61. A woman who worships her at any place will become miserable, unfortunate and barren.

62. She will become the most sinful with her chastity violated like this woman with five (i.e. many) husbands. She will be notorious like this woman.

63-64. The members of the family of this woman shall become sinful night-stalkers. Those who maintain themselves through cows in her family shall be devoid of honesty and cleanliness. They will not have association with good people. They will never have a permanent residence.

Thus, she cursed Vidhi and Gāyatrī thereafter.

65-67a. Then, the chaste lady cursed all the groups of Devas; "O Śakra, since this woman of five (many) husbands was brought by you and apparently you thus did good to your preceptor, you will as a result thereof be bound and put in bondage after being defeated by your enemies.

Undoubtedly, you will be in prison for a long time.

67b-68. O Vāsudeva, earlier you approved this woman of five husbands as fit for Vidhi. So, I shall curse you too without hesitation. O wicked-minded one, you will undergo the state of being a servant of another.

69. O foolish Rudra, though close at hand you were indifferent to this act. You did not stop it. So listen to my words:

70. The grief of separation from a living husband which I experience now, will be yours after the death of your wife.

71-72. O Vahnī (Fire-god), you accepted Havis out of greed in that Yajña where this despised woman of five husbands entered as also in other Yajñas without the least hesitation. So, your conduct has become defiled. You will become omnivorous.

73. As before, you will never have long standing happiness along with Svahā and Svadhā. You will be miserable!

74-75. All the Brāhmaṇas had been greedy in their minds. Due to the covetousness for wealth, they performed Homa in the despised Yajña where this woman of five husbands had entered and also said, 'She will become a Brāhmaṇī'.

76. Hence, all these will be assailed by poverty and will become paramours of Vṛṣaliś (Śūdra women or harlots). They will undoubtedly sell the Vedas.

77. O Lord of wealth, you distributed monetary gifts in this miserable Makha. Hence, all your wealth will be unfit for consumption and enjoyment.

78-79. All the groups of the Devas who extended their cooperation and assistance in a defective Yajña pertaining to one with five husbands, will be devoid of progeny. They will be attacked and defeated by Dānavas and will meet with misery.

80. Four others are settled at her side. They are also mentioned as Abhīrī and Sapatnī (co-wife) and they are delighted in their meditation.

81. With Śivadūtī as their leader they are always engaged in hating me. They will not have mutual association.

82. They will not have any contact with any other man on the earth, not even a visual contact. Their residence shall be confined to unsealable tops of mountains, very impassable to all the embodied beings, devoid of all pleasures and enjoyments."

Sūta said:

83. After saying thus the extremely infuriated Sāvitrī dismissed all the Deva-wives who were staying at her sides.

84. She started towards the north though prevented by all the Deva-wives, including Lakṣmī, from all sides.

85. (She said to herself:) 'I will go there where even the name of this lascivious person is not to be heard. I will certainly go there.'

86. She placed one of her feet, the left one, at the ridge of the mountain. With the second she climbed on to the top of the mountain.

87. Even today her left footprint is visible there. It is impressed on the ridge of the mountain. It is meritorious and it is destructive of all sins.

88. A man may be of sinful conduct, but if he worships that footprint, he will be rid of all sins and he will attain the greatest position.

89. A man may worship it with any desire in his mind. He will surely attain it even if it is very rare.

Sūta said:

90. Thus, after meeting with great insult from her own husband, Goddess Sāvitrī settled there on the (top of the) mountain.

91. He who adores her scrupulously, especially on a Full-moon day, attains all wishes desired mentally by him.

92. Listen to the benefit of *Dīpadāna* (offering of a lamp) by a woman devoutly in front of her, with ghee and red wicks.

93. She will enjoy conjugal felicity for as many thousands of births as there are threads burning in the lamp and Muhūrtas during which the ghee lamp burns.

94. She will be blessed with sons and grandsons as well as wealth. She will never be unlucky, barren, one-eyed or hideous in features.

95. Listen to the benefit attained by a woman, even if she be a widow, who dances or sings songs before her.

96. As and when she makes movements of the body while dancing, she actually sheds off the sin perpetrated earlier.

97. She will stay in heaven for as many thousands of years as there are creatures listening to her songs.

98. If any woman makes gifts of fruits with Sāvitrī in view, she rejoices in heaven for as many Yugas as there are fruits.

99. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, if a man offers sweetmeat especially to women having husbands, in the presence of her Dakṣiṇāmūrti (image on the right side, or on the right side of the image), he rejoices in heaven for as many Yugas as there are grains of cooked rice.

100. If anyone performs Śrāddha there with perfect faith offering one *Rasa* (juice) and one *Sasya* (vegetable dish), he will attain the merit that accrues from Gayāśrāddha.

101-102. A Brāhmaṇa (person) should turn to the southern direction (of the goddess) and perform at least one Sandhyā prayer by means of waters poured by his wife at the evening time, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. Thereby he gets as much benefit as though he performed Sandhyā prayer for twelve years.

103. O Brāhmaṇas, do listen to the benefit of the Brāhmaṇas who performs the Japa of Sāvitrī Mantra in front of her. I shall narrate it.

104. If he recites the Mantra ten times, the sins he committed during that birth perish. If he recites it a hundred times, all the sins committed formerly perish and if he recites the Mantra a thousand times, all the sins committed in three Yugas perish.

105. Hence one should assiduously go to Camatkārapura and worship that goddess. She should be specially prayed to and eulogized.

106. He who reads or listens to this story of Sāvitrī shall be rid of all sins and become happy here.

107. Thus, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, what I was asked has been completely narrated to you all, regarding the greatness of Sāvitrī. What more shall I narrate to you?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYTHREE

Gāyatrī Grants Boons

The sages said:

1-2. O Suta, when the furious Sāvitrī departed in this manner, what was done by Gāyatrī and the Suras including Brahmā? Do narrate all this. We are curious to know. How did the Devas who were cursed, continue to stay there in the pavilion?

Sūta said:

3. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, when after cursing them Sāvitrī went away, Gāyatrī got up immediately and uttered these words:

4. "The words that Sāvitrī uttered cannot at all be altered even by the Suras and Asuras.

5. That highly virtuous, great, chaste lady Sāvitrī is senior-most and most superior (to all) in auspicious qualities. She is worthy of worship to all Suras

6. But, O excellent Suras, this is the nature of all women. The blow of a thunderbolt can be endured but not the (bitter) story of a co-wife.

7. On account of me, Brāhmaṇas and Suras have been cursed by Sāvitrī. By means of my power I shall myself make their plight a very normal one

8. O excellent Suras, Vidhī (god Brahmā) has been declared by her as unworthy of being worshipped with Mantras for all the castes beginning with Brāhmaṇas.

9. On the entire surface of the earth in all the seats of Brahmā, no holy rite can attain perfection without Brahmā.

10. A sight of Brahmā always yields a crore times more benefit than that of the worship of Kṛṣṇa and of Liṅga, undoubtedly, especially on all Parvan days.

11. O Viṣṇu, you have been told by her that when you take human incarnation, you will undergo the state of being a servant to others.

12. There you will adopt two distinct forms and take incarnation there. She had referred to my family known by

the name Cowherd. You will be brought up there in such a family for a long time in order to sanctify it

13. One form will be known by the name Kṛṣṇa and the other by the name Arjuna. You will act as the charioteer of your own self named Arjuna.

14. Thereby, those cowherds will attain a praise-worthy status in spite of their fondness for misdemeanour. They will be praised by all the people and more particularly by Devas.

15. Wherever men of my community stay there shall be the presence of Śrī (fortune and prosperity) even if it be a forest.

16. O Śakra, haven't you been told by that enraged lady that you will be imprisoned after being defeated by your enemy?

17-18a. At my instance, Brahmā himself will bring about your release therefrom. Thereafter, even in a battlefield you will not meet with defeat.

18b-19. O Vahni, in your case, the enraged lady has averred that you will be omnivorous. But even the filthy rubbish will soon gain in purity and sacredness when it is touched by your flames and you will be adored.

20. At my instance undoubtedly your wife named Svāhā will propitiate the Devas and Svadhā will propitiate all the Pitṛs.

21. O Rudra, separation from your beloved has been given to you (in the curse). But another better and more excellent lady will become your wife. She will be the splendid daughter of Himācala famous by the name of Gaurī."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYFOUR

Description of Tīrthas

Sūta said:

1-2. After granting the boons thus to all those victims of the curse, she (Gāyatrī) observed the vow of silence and sat on the ground.

Then all the groups of Devas, sages and great ascetics exclaimed: "Excellent! Excellent!" And spoke these words to her:

3. "With the special favour of the Brāhmaṇas, all the people will adore this goddess with great concentration in this human world.

4. Those men who worship this goddess of Surās after worshipping Brahmā, will attain the greatest goal.

5-6. A girl who, after getting a husband, bows down to the feet of Gāyatrī with great concentration and mental purity will undoubtedly be happy as though a Prajāpati has been obtained as her husband. She will be blessed with all happiness and realization of desires. A barren woman or one disliked by her husband will turn into a splendid lady."

The sages said:

7-8. You had said that Hara gave this when one hundred five Padmajas (Brahmās) had gone and that he was pleased and gave this excellent thing to the Brāhmaṇas. How is it? Or is there another Maheśvara? It behoves you to clear this doubt of ours.

9. Do tell us the life span of Śaṅkara as well as that of Hari. Mention that of Brahmā too. We are very much interested in it.

Sūta said:

10. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, I shall speak to you all in detail, the life span of all the three (deities).

11. *Truṭi* is a fourth part of *Nimeṣa*. Two *Nimeṣas* make one *Lava*. Two *Lavas* make one *Kalā* and fifteen *Kalās* make one *Kāṣṭhā*.

12. They say that thirty *Kāṣṭhās* make one *Kalā* and thirty *Kalās* make one *Kṣaṇa*. Those who are conversant with *Muhūrtas* say that a *Muhūrta* consists of twelve *Kṣaṇas*.

13. Learned men say that thirty *Muhūrtas* make one day and night. Thirty *Ahorātras* (day and night) make one month. The period of time consisting of two months is called a *Ṛtu* (season).

14. Three *Rtus* make one *Ayana* (Transit of the Sun). Two *Ayanas* make one *Valsara* (year). That becomes one day of *Devas*, O excellent Brāhmaṇas.

15-16. *Uttarāyaṇa* (Northern transit) is the day and the other one (i.e. *Dakṣiṇāyana*) is the night (of *Devas*). One

million seven hundred twenty-eight thousand human years will make the first, Kṛtayuga, O excellent Brāhmaṇas.

17. The period consisting of one million two hundred ninety-six thousand years¹ is mentioned as the second, Tretā Yuga, O excellent Brāhmaṇas.

18. Dvāpara, the third Yuga, is mentioned as consisting of eight hundred sixty-four thousand Years.

19. Kali yuga, the fourth one, consists of four hundred thirty-two thousand years. So say learned men.

20. A thousand four-Yuga periods make one day of Pitāmaha; thirty such days make one month and twelve months a year.

21. Brahmā, the grandfather, lives for such one hundred years. Now his age is eighty years and six months.

22. Of the first Pratipad day of this noble-souled one two Yāmas have passed by the current Friday.

23. One year of Brahmā is mentioned as one day of Viṣṇu.

24. He also lives for a hundred years according to his reckoning. It has been proclaimed that fifty-five years have passed by since his nativity.

25. Five Tithis (lunar days) and half of a Yāma have passed by this Monday. A year of Viṣṇu makes one day of Maheśvara.

26-29. Śiva lives in that form for a hundred years. He stays till Sadāśiva's mouth (face) takes an *Ucchvasita* (inhalation) when there is *Niśvasita* (exhalation) he merges into Śakti.

In the case of all embodied beings such as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śivas, Gandharvas, Urugas, Rākṣasas etc., O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the number of inhalations and exhalations is twenty-one thousand six hundred in the course of a day and night. Six *Ucchvāsas* and *Niśvāsas* constitute one *Pala*.

30. *Nāḍī* is mentioned as consisting of sixty *Palas*. Sixty *Nāḍīs* make one day and night. There is no limit to the *Niśvāsa* and *Ucchvāsa* of Sadāśiva. Hence, he is remembered as everlasting.

31. Others too who attain the realization of Brahman become everlasting. It is the truth that has been mentioned by me.

1. Read *ṣaṇṇavatyā sahasrakaiḥ* for *ṣoḍaśānām sahasrakaiḥ*.

The sages said.

32-34. O Sūtaputra, if Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara undoubtedly undergo death when their hundred years are complete, how is it that learned men say that men with lives of short duration in the mortal world attain Mukti (release)? Certainly, their contention regarding the path of salvation is false.

Sūta said:

35. There is neither beginning nor end to Kāla (Time). It cannot be delimited. Innumerable Brahmās, Viṣṇus and Maheśvaras have come and gone having attained Mokṣa

36. They are numerous like sand particles. When their allotted span of hundred years is complete, they attain salvation. If men have faith as a result of realization of Brahman they will have salvation undoubtedly.

37. In the eyes of human beings, flies and mosquitoes are considered very insignificant creatures. Similar are human beings on the surface of the earth in the eyes of Indra and other gods.

38. Just as human beings are like (lit. in the position of) insects (to gods) so even gods (are to) Brahmā of unmanifest origin.

39. Just as Devas remain in the status of worms and insects for Brahmā, so Brahmā also remains in the status of insects in regard for Viṣṇu.

40. Just as Pitāmaha remains in the status of worms and insects for Viṣṇu, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, so also he (Viṣṇu) is to be considered by Śiva and Śakti.

41. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, just as Viṣṇu should be considered as a worm by them both (i.e. Śiva and Śakti) so also they both should be considered like insects by Sadāśiva.

42. In this manner, when Brahman is realized through the mind sanctified by means of faith after various kinds of Yajñas, people attain the great Sadāśiva.

43. Those people who perform Agniṣṭoma and other Yajñas with the full complement of Dakṣiṇās for the sake of heavenly pleasures, do go to heaven and enjoy various kinds of pleasures.

44. When merit gets exhausted they return to the earth. But if one attains the greatest Absolute (Mokṣa) through the realization of Brahman there is no rebirth.

45. Hence, by all means, one should have repeated practice in the spiritual path in the course of many births. Later gradually one attains salvation.

46. The *Leśa* (modicum) of spiritual knowledge acquired by one in the course of one life will be doubled in the second birth and trebled in the third birth.

47. In the course of every life, this process will go on increasing one by one.

The sages said.

48. O Sūtaja, if you do know it, expound to us how men attain the realization of Brahman.

Sūta said:

49. What power do I have in the matter of expounding human realizations! How can one who does not know himself explain it to others?

50. But, O excellent Brāhmanas, I shall narrate unto you the instruction imparted to me by my father in regard to the knowledge of Brahman

51. There are two auspicious Tīrthas in the holy spot of Hatakeśvara. They were created by two virgins and they (the Tīrthas) accord the knowledge of Brahman to men.

52-55. The Tīrthas were created by a Brāhmaṇa girl and a Śūdra girl. A devotee shall perform the rite of holy ablution in those Tīrthas on the eighth and fourteenth lunar days. Then he should adore devoutly the well-known *Siddhi-Pādukās* (Sandals of Spiritual achievement). They are well-protected and concealed in the centre of the Gartā (deep chasm, pit) and are adored by the two virgins. They have been deposited there along with (or by) Śakti for the purpose of enhanced self-vision. By the end of the year, the devotee shall realize Brahman. They give the delight of the realization of Brahman unto the people desirous of salvation. My father went there and therefore remained one equipped with that knowledge.

56. At his behest I (too) went there and stayed there for

a year and adored the sandals. Therefore, the knowledge too was gained.

57. O Brāhmaṇas, I know whatever I learn by listening to the excellent Purāṇa and whatever is current and whatever is likely to happen in the future.

58. It is undoubtedly the result of his favour that the means of valid knowledge is present (in him) here because I have been (handicapped by) the state of being a Sūta (chainoteer caste) and therefore excluded from the study of the Vedas.

59. I know the entire meaning thereof (i.e. of the Vedas) like Sage Bhartṛyañña. Hence go to this place alone, if your purpose is to achieve salvation.

60. Of what avail are these Sattras that bestow heavenly pleasures but cause the return therefrom? After going there propitiate those two sandals that bestow Siddhi. Thence, the realization of Brahman shall be effected by the end of the year.

The sages said:

61. Excellent! Excellent! O highly esteemed one, you have given a very great advice. We have been redeemed from the ocean of worldly existence thereby.

62. At the conclusion of this Sattra extending over twelve years, we have decided to go there. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYFIVE

Story of the Daughter of Chāndogya

The sages said:

1-3. O highly intelligent one, a Śūdra girl and another, a Brāhmaṇa girl, were cited by you as having created two excellent Tirthas in the holy spot of Hātakeśvara.

How did the pair of Tirthas originate there? By whom was it effected? Describe this in full details. The origin of the sandals has already been heard by us earlier from you. Yet narrate it too as well as the greatness thereof.

Sūta said:

4. Formerly, there was a well-known Nāgara Brāhmaṇa by the name Chāndogya and all the leading Brāhmaṇas in his family lineage were also well-known as Chāndogyas.

5. He was conversant with the Sāmaveda and he righteously followed the duties of a householder. An excellent daughter was born to him in his old age.

6. She was fully equipped with all the good qualities and marked with splendid features. She was reddish (in complexion) in seven of her limbs and had three parts characterized with depth. Five of her parts were very subtle and her waist was not very large.

7. Her eyes were large and resembled the petals of a lotus. She appeared very splendid with long hanging tresses of hair. She had lips resembling a Bimba fruit. Her hair on the body were short and she had lustre of the full Moon.

8-9. The father named her Brāhmaṇī, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, because she had been given to him by the Brāhmaṇas adored duly at the extremities of the Maṇḍapa.

Though he had no child for a long time, he was blessed with one in the later stage of his life. The slender-bodied girl grew up like the digit of the Moon.

10. The girl grew like the Moon in the bright half of a month. She gave delight to the eyes of the people. The Lord of Anarta too had a daughter having the same features on the same day when this girl was born to the noble-souled Chāndogya.

11. The lying-in chamber became brightly illumined by clusters of gems as it were even during the nights due to the refulgence of the body of that girl. Therefore, the father named her Ratnavatī.

12. The splendid girl had the companionship of the Brāhmaṇa girl continuously without any separation whatsoever.

13-14. They shared the same bed and meals. They had the same type of food. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, when she became eight years old, her father thought about her marriage. He wanted to give her to a deserving bridegroom. On coming to know of this, the girl became miserable.

15. Afraid of the imminent separation from her companion, Ratnavatī became very distressed. With eyes filled with tears, she spoke in words choked and faltering due to tears:

16. "Dear friend, my father will celebrate my marriage now. After being married, I will no longer have your companionship."

17. These words were like a blow of thunderbolt unto her. On hearing them, the companion wept clinging to her neck. Her affection caused the excitement of all her limbs and senses.

18. On hearing her lamentation, Mrgāvātī, her mother, came there in great bewilderment and spoke these words:

19. "O daughter, why do you cry? Who has been unpleasant to you? Now itself I shall punish that ill-natured fellow."

Ratnavatī said:

20. Listen. Brāhmaṇi is my dearest friend. She is on a par with my very vital life. The splendid girl will marry and go to the abode of her husband.

21. I will not be able to survive the separation from her. It is for this reason that I cry in distress.

Mrgāvātī said:

22-23 O my daughter, if it is so (a way-out is possible) I will cause this dear companion of yours to be given in marriage to the son of the Brāhmaṇa engaged as the priest of the king to whose house you will be going as a bride. Thereby, your association with her can still continue.

24. After saying thus the queen summoned the excellent Brahmana Chāndogya and spoke to him politely:

25-28. "O holy Brahmana, this daughter of yours is the dearest friend of my daughter. The splendid maiden cannot endure her separation even for a short while.

Similarly, my daughter is the dearest friend of your daughter. Hence, O Brāhmaṇa of excellent Vratas, follow my words which I am going to speak now.

Your daughter should be given to the Brahmana engaged as the priest of the king who is likely to be offered the hand of my daughter some time hereafter.

Thereby, O excellent one among Brāhmaṇas, both of them

will be staying in the same place with your favour. There will no longer be any separation between them."

Chāndogya said:

29-30. If a Nāgara gives his daughter in marriage to someone other than a Nāgara and if one (a Nāgara) accepts another (non-Nāgara) girl then he shall become sinful and a *Pankti-Dūsaka* (a fallen defiler of the row of meal-takers) He will cease to be a Nāgara. So, I will not give my daughter in marriage to anyone except a Nāgara. This decision has been made by me.

Brāhmanī said:

31. I will not have anyone as my husband. I will remain a virgin maintaining celibacy. I will go to that place where my dearest friend is likely to be given in marriage.

32. O my father, if you compel me to marry anyone, I will take poison or jump into fire

33. Or, O my father, it is certain that I will kill myself with some weapon. Know this well, O father. and do what you are competent to do.

34. Realizing that determination on her part, the Brahmana became extremely vexed. He did not force her, because he was afraid of killing a lady, which is a sin, if caused forcibly. He abandoned her there and went to his own abode.

35. She diverted herself in the company of Ratnavati, O excellent Brahmanas. Though she had to deny herself the affection of a father, she remained delighted in her heart.

36. She attained the prime of her youth. She became unrivalled in the beauty of form all over the earth.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYSIX

Bṛhadbala Proceeds to the city of Ānarta

Sūta said:

1-3. Seeing that his daughter had attained prime of youth with unrivalled beauty of form and excellent complexion, King Ānarta thought about the matter of giving his daughter away in marriage.

He was aware that a person who gives his daughter in marriage to an undeserving person out of temptation for some gain goes to hell.

He thought thus for a long time but could not meet with an excellent and deserving bridegroom.

4. He sent for men famous in the art of painting portraits and objects among all living beings (and said to them):

5-6. "Go ahead at my behest. Draw the portraits of men all over the earth on canvas and show them (to me). Better show them to my daughter so that the chaste girl can select some suitable king as her husband, lest there should be any blame on me."

7. On hearing his words, all the painters set out and visited various kings all over the world in their own palaces.

8. After painting the portraits of kings of suitable age and prime of youth endowed with handsome features and liberal-mindedness, they showed them to Ratnavatī one by one at the behest of the king.

9. Among them all, Bṛhadbala, the splendid overlord of Daśārṇa land, was chosen by her as her husband.

10. Then, after a discreet enquiry the delighted king of Ānarta sent a messenger for the sake of matrimonial alliance instructing him thus:

11-12. "At my behest go to the Lord of Daśārṇa land. He should be told humbly: 'Come to me so that I can give my daughter in marriage to you. Her name is Ratnavatī. She is well-known as the most beautiful lady in all the three worlds.'"

13-14. The messenger quickly went to the place where king Bṛhadbala was present and told him clearly what the king of Ānarta had told. That king heard the excellent statement of those and was delighted very much. Accompanied by his vast army of four divisions, that king went to the city of Ānarta.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYSEVEN

The Expiation of Parāvasu

Sūta said:

1-3. In the meantime, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, there was a Nāgara Brāhmaṇa who had mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. He was well-known as Viśvāvasu.

In his later years he had a son well-known as Parāvasu whom he considered on a par with his own vital air.

He concluded the study of the Vedas by the time he became a full-fledged youth. He spent most of his time along with his esteemed friends who always indulged in jokes, fun and gaiety.

4. Once in the month of Māgha he went to the house of his preceptor and began to chant the Vedas.

5. At midnight he got up and went to the house of a prostitute guarded by all his friends. He slept with the courtesan there.

6. He kept near him a pot filled with water intended for Ācamana (ritualistic sipping) as well as for drinking purposes.

7. Towards the close of the night, he became very thirsty. Though overcome by sleep and lethargy, he left the bed and got up.

8. The pot of liquor kept by the courtesan had been placed lower down. Mistaking it for water, he drank the liquor.

9. Immediately, he came to know that it was liquor and he was distressed. He cast off the liquor-pot with great dejection. He lamented much.

10-11. "Alas, what a great misdeed has been committed by me! Overcome by sleep, I have drunk the hated liquor mistaking it for water.

What shall I do? Where shall I go? How can I get myself sanctified. I shall perform expiatory rite even if it be very difficult to do."

12. After resolving thus mentally, he went to Śaṅkha Tirtha. When the day dawned, he took his bath.

13-14. He caused his tuft (and beard) to be shaved off in a hurry later and went to the place where his preceptor and his disciples were engaged in chanting the Vedas in the place assigned to it. Like a Śūdra, he sat in a place very far off.

15. When he was seen with hair and beard shaven off, by his friends, he was frequently stroked on the tonsured head by them with the tips of their hands.

16. On seeing him bereft of hair and beard, utterly distressed and shedding tears, the preceptor spoke to him:

17. "O my dear one, why are you sitting very far off in a morose mood? Come near me and tell me. By whom have you been humiliated?"

Parāvasu said:

18-19. O venerable Sir, I am now unfit for your service. I had been to the abode of a courtesan. I mistook the pot of liquor of the courtesan for my water-pot and I drank it off. Hence, O holy Lord, prescribe an expiatory rite for the sake of purifying myself.

20. Undoubtedly, I shall perform whatever has been ordained in the Dharmaśāstra (religious) texts.

21. Thereupon, his friends, the Brāhmaṇa boys, who stood around there made funny remarks in the presence of the courtesan and the preceptor:

22. "The daughter of the king is well-known to all the people by the name Ratnavatī. You must hold her breasts and quickly kiss her lips. Thereby you will become purified' not otherwise."

Parāvasu said:

23. O my friends, this is no time for fun or gaiety when I am in an odd position. If you have any love for me by virtue of my being your boyhood friend, gather together other Brāhmaṇas and find out a way for my redemption.

24. Thereupon, they all became serious and stopped passing jocular remarks. They became distressed due to his grief. They went up to Viśvāvasu and narrated the news concerning him (Parāvasu).

25. On hearing their words extremely disagreeable and unpleasant to the ears, he went along with his wife to the place where his son was present.

26. He was extremely distressed. He faltered at every step due equally to his old age and the grief arising from the misdemeanour of his son.

27-28. With words choked and faltering due to tears the grief-stricken couple spoke to their son: "Alas, dear son! What have you done?" He (Parāvasu) narrated all the details about his act to them and expressed his desire, saying: "Hence, I shall perform expiatory rite to sanctify myself."

Thereupon, Viśvāvasu summoned for the purpose Brāhmaṇas expert in the Smṛtis and having great mastery over the Vedic lore.

29-30. Parāvasu stood before them with palms joined in reverence and said: "I have unwittingly imbibed liquor at night having lifted up the pot of the courtesan mistaking it for my own waterpot. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, considering this, do give me the requisite expiation so that, with your favour, I can regain sanctity."

31. On being requested thus by him, those Brāhmaṇas, the expounders of the Smṛti texts, pored over the scriptural texts and spoke to him:

32-33. "If anyone performs expiatory rite on behalf of one who does not deserve it due to excess of arrogance, anger, love or fear, he incurs the sin thereof. Hence, we shall give (advise) you the befitting expiatory rites. If you are capable of doing it, do so with great concentration of mind."

Parāvasu said:

34. I have not been seen imbibing liquor by anyone, O Brāhmaṇas. Then why should I ask you, if I don't intend to act accordingly at your instance?

35. Hence, lay down the amends befitting me for the sake of purity even if it be terrible and destructive of life. Otherwise, you will incur sin.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

36. A Brāhmaṇa who knowingly and wantonly drinks liquor shall become pure by drinking molten gold of equal quantity.

37. If liquor has been drunk unwittingly by any Brāhmaṇa, he becomes pure by drinking heated clarified butter of the same quantity.

38. Thus everything regarding the expiatory rite for the sake of purity has been mentioned to you. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, if you can do it, do carry it out.

Parāvasu said:

39. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, a mouthful of liquor was drunk by me. I shall drink an equal quantity of ghee made hot like fire.

40. At your behest I shall do so today itself for the sake of the purity of my body.

Viśvāvasu (was stunned) on hearing those words comparable to the thunderbolt.

41. The words of his son and those of the Brāhmaṇas were no less than a thunderbolt. He then became extremely distressed and said with faltering words after shedding profuse tears:

42-43. "For the sake of the purity of my son, I will give away all my possessions. But I will not let him at any cost perform this expiatory rite.

Let me become *Āsrāddheya* (unworthy of being invited for Śrāddha) or *Vipāṅkṭeya* (unworthy of sitting in the row of Brāhmaṇas for meals) along with my son. I shall very well abandon this spot. Dear son, do not perform this."

44. On hearing those words of his father causing obstacles to the expiatory rites, the son spoke words affectionately:

45. "Stop this excess of affection for me. Do not create obstacles. I will certainly carry out this expiatory rite. This decision has been taken by me."

Mother said:

46. If it is compulsory for you, dear son, to perform this expiatory rite for the sake of purity, then I will enter the burning fire before you, along with my husband.

47. I will not be able to endure seeing you drinking the fiery hot ghee and falling dead thereafter. I solemnly take this vow.

Father said:

48. Dear son, your mother has said most pertinently and also for the sake of your own benefit. I approve of it and shall do so undoubtedly.

Sūta said:

49. In the meantime, all those friends of his heard about him and came there in great distress.

50. They spoke various words to Vibhāvasu (Viśvāvasu) distressed along with his wife over his son, having decided to commit suicide.

51. They also persuaded the son to desist from the performance of the said expiatory rite, but they were not able to do so.

52. Both of them, the father as well as the son, were bent upon putting an end to their lives.

53. Then they went to the Vāstupada (site of abode) where the omniscient Bharṭṛyajña, the highly esteemed scholar who clarified all doubts, was present.

54-55. To him they narrated everything concerning Parāvasu, how he imbibed liquor, the details of expiatory rites jokingly mentioned by his friends, that enjoined by the exponents of Smṛtis and ultimately the idea of self-immolation by Parāvasu in fire.

56. They also reported how he, his wife and all the friends grieved over this. After narrating all this, they spoke again politely:

57-60. "We all know that there is nothing unknown to you whether past, present, or future. We know that this whole city is very much in doubt about Viśvāvasu. Hence, we have approached you.

O highly esteemed one, say whether there is any other expiatory rite for the purification of this Brāhmaṇa who has imbibed liquor. There is nothing in the Vedic lore that is not known to you."

Thereupon, Bharṭṛyajña laughed loudly and spoke these words:

61. "There is a very pleasant and easy means of purification for this Brāhmaṇa. Though present (in existence, available) it is actually non-existent. This is my opinion."

The Brāhmaṇas said:

62. O highly intelligent one, these statements are contradictory to each other. How is the means present? How is it

non-existent? It behoves you to explicate. All the Brāhmaṇas are extremely surprised thereby.

Bhartr̥yājña said:

63. A flaw in the performance of Japa, penance, sacrifice etc. can be corrected if the Brāhmaṇas wish so.

64. If the Brāhmaṇas, especially those hailing from the Nāgara community, utter "*Achidra*" (free from flaw) it shall definitely be so.

65. Similarly, whatever has been uttered by those stationed in Brahma-śālā (Yajña site), it should be known, shall not become otherwise even if uttered in fun without a basis in Smṛti texts.

66-67. This Parāvasu has been told jokingly by his friends: "Your purity from the adverse effects of imbibing liquor shall be effected if you hold the breasts of Ratnavatī and kiss her lips."

68. This has been mentioned by me as a pleasant and easy means of purification in the case of this Brāhmaṇa. If he performs this in accordance with the injunctions of Parāśara, he shall become purified.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

69. If the king were to hear this statement, he will become extremely intolerant and may kill all the Brāhmaṇas. It will be contrary to what we want.

70. Hence, let this Brāhmaṇa Parāvasu do whatever he likes in the company of his mother and father. We shall go home.

Bhartr̥yājña said:

71. That king is just and wise. He is devoted to all types of pious activities. He is an adept in all scriptural texts and is a devotee of Devas and Brāhmaṇas.

72. Hence, let all the Nāgaras go to his abode along with me.

73. We shall keep the Madhyaga in front of us. Through him let us narrate the incident concerning the imbibing of liquor.

74. We shall also narrate what was said jokingly to Parāvasu by his friends. The statement of Parāśara is greater than any other Smṛti.

75. On hearing it, if the king becomes furiously intolerant and over-covetous, I shall make him abide by the path of the good.

Sūta said:

76-82. Then all those Nāgaras became extremely pleased. They congratulated Bhartṛyajña in different kinds of words of approbation.

The *Madhyaga* was placed in the centre along with him (Bhartṛyajña). This *Madhyaga* hailed from Gartā Tirtha. He had fully mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. He was conversant with the Smṛtis and all characteristic omens. He was famous as a regular householder preserving the sacred fires. He regularly performed many Yajñas. He scrupulously abided by the opinion of Bhartṛyajña.

It was he who was settled in this holy spot in Camatkārapura by virtue of being a Brāhmaṇa, formerly by the father of Karnotpalā, the king of Ānarta who had fallen from heaven. Due to his efforts all the tasks of all the Brāhmaṇas were accomplished. Other works of Camatkārapura also got completed through him.

His name was Haribhadra. All the Nāgaras took him along with Bhartṛyajña and came to the threshold of the royal palace. They also took with them Parāvasu and his parents.

83. The door-keeper hastened within and intimated to the king that the Brāhmaṇas had arrived accompanied by Haribhadra and Bhartṛyajña.

84. On hearing that they had all come to the royal threshold, Ānarta came to receive them directly accompanied by his own priest.

85. The king offered *Argha*, *Madhuparka*, a cow and a seat first to Bhartṛyajña and then to Haribhadra.

86. The same was offered to four Brāhmaṇas with *Mudga* (kidney bean) in their hands and also to the other Brāhmaṇas. Then the first one (the king) accepted their benedictions through Ṛk, Yajus and Sāman hymns.

87. He came to the pavilion and made all of them sit on excellent seats of gold in due order.

88. When all of them sat, the king sat on the groupd. With palms joined in reverence he spoke thus:

89-91. "Blessed indeed am I. I have been duly honoured since all the Nāgara folk have come to my abode along with Brartryajña.

Hence, surely command me, ye all. What task shall I carry out? To one who has arrived at my abode now, I will give even that which cannot be (ordinarily) given. I will approach even him who should not be approached. I will do even that which cannot be done."

On hearing this, Haribhadra hurriedly stood up.

92. For that purpose (i.e. what should be done now) he asked the Ādyas (the first ones, the elders) and then the Bahvṛcas, Adhvaryus and Chāndogyas. Then he was permitted by them.

93-94. "May the Ādyas recite *Prāṇarudra* Mantras and the Bahvṛcas the *Jivasūkta* hymn. It was by these that the *Savana* (sacrifice) of Prthivī etc., was performed formerly. Let all the Adhvaryus and the Chāndogyas recite separately the hymns including *Madhucyuta* for the purpose of fulfillment."

95. When the excellent Brāhmaṇas were addressed thus with the concurrence of Bhartryajña, they recited everything as was said by that intelligent one.

96. At the conclusion of the chanting and recitation the Madhyaga duly narrated to the king the episode connected with Parāvasu.

97. He narrated how *Āsava* (liquor) had been imbibed by him, how the friends prattled something by way of expiation and how the expounders of the Smṛti proclaimed the expiatory rite of drinking (hot) ghee.

98. He also mentioned how all the Brāhmaṇas were brought together by Bhartryajña.

On hearing his words the king became delighted. With palms joined in due deference he spoke thus:

99-100. "I am blessed. I am meritorious because a great favour has been bestowed on me by the Nāgara Brāhmaṇas resulting in the saving of the lives of three Brāhmaṇas. Blessed indeed is my daughter who will herself save three Brāhmaṇas who had decided to end their lives."

101. O Brāhmaṇas, then the king brought his daughter there immediately. When she sat in the centre of the assembly he offered her to the Brāhmaṇas (and said):

102. "O excellent Brāhmaṇas, at your instance this daughter of mine has been summoned by me. Let that Brāhmaṇa do what has been laid down by Bharṭṛyajña."

103. Thereupon, Bharṭṛyajña summoned the Brāhmaṇa Parāvasu there and spoke these words in the presence of the girl:

104-107. "Even as you kiss her on her lips if you consider this girl as your mother you will attain Siddhi. If you kiss her with passionate love, O Parāvasu, blood will come out of your mouth. If you are innocent and pure, undoubtedly milk will exude therefrom.

On coming into contact with your hands if blood does not flow out of the breasts but milk does flow out, it should be known that you have become purified."

108-110. After saying thus to him the Brāhmaṇa said to the girl: "Dear daughter, consider this excellent Brāhmaṇa as though he is your son. Thereby, he will attain purity. In accordance with the Smṛti, the expiatory rite is the kissing of your lips and touching your breasts.

This expiatory rite has been jokingly suggested by the friends of this leading Brāhmaṇa. Thereby, he will attain purity. Otherwise he will meet with death."

Sūta said:

111-112. She assented saying, "So it shall be" and spoke to him (Parāvasu) shyly: "Do come dear child, perform the expiatory rite for the sake of purity.

I have adopted motherly attitude and you have been considered my son."

He too considered her as his mother and came to her vicinity.

113-114. Even as all the people were watching he touched her breasts. At the very same moment, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, two streams of milk flowed from those breasts touched by him. The streams resembled a jasmine flower, the moon and snow flakes.

115. Afterwards when the Brāhmaṇa kissed her lips, milk flowed out of her mouth as before.

116. In the meantime hands were clapped by all the Brāhmaṇas as well as the king, even as they repeatedly said: "This Brāhmaṇa is pure now."

117. He (Parāvasu) circumambulated the girl many times. After bowing down to her, he said: "Forgive me, O mother fond of your son."

118. On seeing this great wonderful incident the king was surprised. He praised Bhartṛyājña who had enjoined the expiatory rite.

119-121. "Oh! Wonderful! I am extremely fortunate, since such Brāhmaṇas hailing from Camatkārapura have come to my city.

A girl like this has carried out an unprecedented task. Ratnavatī is really highly praise-worthy and endowed with truthfulness and purity.

Similarly, this Brāhmaṇa Parāvasu is not an ordinary Brāhmaṇa. In spite of coming close to such a girl, he has not become excited."

122. After saying thus and bidding farewell to those Brāhmaṇas, the excellent king went into the inner apartment taking his daughter with him.

123-125. Then all those Nāgaras stipulated the bounds of decency: "From now no courtesan staying here should keep liquor or meat in her abode. These defiled women will spoil the sons of Nāgaras.

One who transgresses this stipulation should be punished by us and banished from this holy spot. After death, she will incur sins."

126. Then the *Madhyaga* clapped thrice with a shoot of *Udumbara* tree (in his hand).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYEIGHT

Śūdrī Brāhmaṇī Tīrtha

Sūta said:

1-3. It was at this juncture that the Lord of Daśārṇa came to that spot for doing matrimonial alliance with Ratnavatī.

But on hearing the details of the incident pertaining to Ratnavatī, he became extremely disinterested and so returned to his own city.

On hearing that the visiting king Daśārṇa was going back to his own city, Ānarta followed closely behind him to make him turn back.

4. After coming near him, he said: "O king, why have you turned back without taking the hand of my daughter in marriage?"

Daśārṇa said:

5. This daughter of yours has become defiled. Her virginity has been molested as her lips have been kissed and her breasts have been pressed.

6-8a. Your daughter has now earned the appellation of Punarbhū ('widow remarried'). If any son is somehow born to a Punarbhū at any time, he will undoubtedly cause the downfall of ten predecessors and ten successors in his family and he himself will be the twenty-first one. Therefore, I will not woo your daughter, O king.

8b-9. After saying this rudely, the Lord of Daśārṇa went back to his city. In spite of his offer of various things such as elephants, horses and chariots, and pressing pleadings, he insulted the other king.

10. Then the distressed king of Ānarta returned to his abode and told Mṛgāvatī all that had happened and what had been spoken by the king. He thus shared the misery of his wife, daughter and the ministers.

11-12. But they said: "There are innumerable kings on the earth. They are endowed with (good) features, prime of youth and possess elephants, horses and chariots. O Lord, give your daughter to one of them. Why should you be dejected and subject yourself to tormenting grief?"

13. On hearing their words, albeit uttered in great grief, Ānarta became delighted and he addressed the ministers and others.

14-15. He used extremely conciliatory and sweet words to his daughter who was present there: "Dear daughter, all the kings have been seen by you in the portraits. O splendid girl, choose some other king from them, whoever is likely to satisfy you on being seen directly."

Ratnavatī said:

16. At any cost I will not take another husband excepting the Lord of Daśārṇa. May the reason thereof be heard.

17. Kings speak only once. They don't change their words. Twice-borns speak only once. Virgins are given in marriage only once. All these three take place only once.

18. After realizing this, dear father, desist from giving me to another king. It does not behove you to do so because the eternal Dharma cannot be sustained thereby.

Ānarta said:

19-20. You have been given to the Lord of Daśārṇa only orally. He has not grasped your hand in the presence of the holy fire, Brāhmaṇas and preceptor. Hence, tell me, dear daughter, how has he become your husband?

Ratnavatī said:

21. At the outset, all acts are mentally thought of once. Later, it is uttered orally. Thereafter, it is carried out in practice.

22. Indeed, the soul has been given over to him at the outset by me. Thereafter, O Lord, it was orally given to him by you. Then, how can he not be my husband? Tell me if you really think so.

23. I will undertake penance adopting the vow of celibacy. I will not wed another husband. This decision has been made by me.

24. On hearing those terrible words, her mother Mṛgāvatī spoke these words with tears filling her eyes in the state of dejection and distress:

25-29. "Dear daughter, do not be rash enough to undertake a penance at any cost. You are a mere girl of delicate limbs and always accustomed to enjoy pleasures.

O blameless girl, how will you be able to perform a penance? Your diet should be confined to roots, fruits and bulbous roots. You will have to wear bark garments. Hence, I shall give you in marriage to some eminent king.

This your highly esteemed companion named Brāhmaṇī has herself adopted a life of celibacy and is awaiting your marriage. She is to become the wife of the priest of that king to whose mansion you will go after being wedded."

Ratnavatī said:

30. You should never speak again words like these on my behalf, if you love your daughter and desire that I should be alive.

31-32. On the other hand, if you obstinately put obstacles in my penance, I will swallow some powerful poison and put an end to my life. Or, I will cut off my tongue or drown myself in water.

33-34. After taking such an ominous decision and telling her mother in so many words, she said thus to Brāhmaṇī, her esteemed girl companion. She embraced her respectfully and said with palms joined in reverence:

35-36. "O splendid girl, I have discharged you. Go to the mansion of your father so that your father can give you to a noble-souled Nāgara.

Forgive me if I have at my time spoken harshly to you. I have certainly forgiven whatever might have been uttered by you against me."

Brāhmaṇī said:

37. A girl of eight years is called *Gaurī*. One of nine years is *Rohiṇī*. A girl of ten years shall be a *Kanyā*. Beyond this she is *Rajasvalā* (one with menses).

38. O lady of excellent countenance, my girlhood has ceased after coming in contact with you. I have come to the age of sixteen years with regular menses as befitting a woman.

39. No Nāgara here will take my hand in marriage in view of his knowledge of the Smṛti dictum:

40-41. "He who marries a Rajasvalā (a girl above ten years of age) without feeling aversion, will cause the downfall of ten generations through the child thereof.

A father who gives away in marriage a Rajasvalā girl without aversion shall undoubtedly cause the downfall of ten generations of predecessors as well as ten generations of successors."

42. Hence, O splendid girl, I shall perform penance along with you. I have nothing to do with my father. I have nothing to do at all with my mother.

Sūta said:

43. After resolving this, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, those two girls went to the place where the great sage Bharṭṛyajña was staying personally.

44-46. He was stationed in the beautiful Vāstupada consisting of all Tirthas. By the power of his penance, no one, whether a human being or an ordinary base creature, had the feelings of anger. Mongooses played with serpents and cats with mice. Stags played with panthers and crows with owls.

The splendid girls approached Bharṭṛyajña who was comfortably seated and spoke to him humbly with palms joined in reverence:

Brāhmaṇī said:

47-48. Accompanied by this friend of mine, a princess, I have come to your feet for the sake of performing penance. Hence do expound the procedure of penance. Do instruct me, O highly intelligent one, so that I can perform it completely.

Bharṭṛyajña said:

49. I shall expound to you the procedure of penance distinctly whereby even salvation can be obtained, why speak of heaven?

50-51. The following types of penance have been enjoined by Vedas: Cāṇḍrāyaṇa, Kṛcchra, Sāntapana, taking food once instead of six times (i.e. once in three days), taking food

on alternate days, Brahmakūrca (drinking *Pañcagavya* on Full-moon day after fast), Trirātra (fasting for three days) and Ekabhakta (a single meal per day), Ayācita (without begging for food or an eatable).

52. These types of penance should be performed by persons without *Rāga* (attachment) and *Dveṣa* (aversion). They should be performed in accordance with one's capacity. Dear daughter, the benefit of all of them is equally desirable. Thereby one attains the Siddhi that has been mentally conceived always.

53. When an attitude of impartiality arises in the mind for enemies and friends as well as a stone and a gem, one attains salvation.

54. If after taking the sign (initiation in penance) one becomes angry, everything becomes futile, like *Homa* performed in ashes.

Sūta said:

55. Brāhmaṇī promised to do so by saying "So it shall be." Accompanied by Ratnavatī, she went to a water-pond.

56. It was full of clear water and was adorned by clusters of lotus-plants.

Then she performed the Cāndrāyaṇa rite, the first of the Vratas pertaining to her penance.

57. Then she performed the Kṛcchra expiation and the Sāntapana rite thereafter. Thereafter, for three years she took food only once in the course of six meal times.

58. Afterwards, for three years she performed the Vrata of observing *Trirātra* (fasting for three days). Then she passed three years observing *Ekāntaropavāsas* (fasting on alternate days).

59. The saintly lady remained in water during early winter and during summer she performed penance in the midst of five fires and earned fame.

60. The chaste lady remained without a shelter during rainy season. She meditated on Janārdana, the Lord of Devas, throughout the days and nights.

61. The king's daughter went to another pond and performed whatever Vrata had been performed by Brāhmaṇī

earlier. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, that lady of good holy rites was then highly delighted.

62. Then she adopted a regular fruit-diet for a hundred and fifty years. Afterwards, she ate only withered leaves for an equal period of time.

63. Then for a period of six hundred years, she took in only water. Thereafter, for the period of a thousand full years her only intake was air.

64. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, as the virgin went on performing her penance, her excellent refulgence went on increasing.

65-66. In the meantime, the delighted Moon-crested Lord accompanied by Umā, came within her view. Thereafter, he spoke these words as majestically as the deep sound of a rumbling cloud:

67. "Dear child, conclude your penance at my instance and pray for anything mentally desired, so that I can grant it to you entirely."

Brāhmaṇī said:

68. This alone had been my wish, O Śaṅkara, that you may be seen, since, O Lord, your vision is very difficult to get even in a dream in the case of humans.

The Lord said:

69. O lady of excellent penance, my vision can never be futile. Welfare unto you. Therefore, choose your boon so that I can grant it unto you.

Brāhmaṇī said:

70. This is my excellent companion, the chaste princess of great renown well-known by the name Ratnavatī. She is dearer to me than my own vital breath.

71. Though she is born of a Śūdra womb¹, she in respect of penance is on a par with me. If she ceases to perform penance I too shall cease. O Lord of the universe, there is no doubt about it.

1. The reading should be corrected as *kṣātra-yonim* and not *śūdra yonim*, for both kings. Ānarta and Daśārṇa were Kṣatriyas.

72. O Lord of Suras, due to the affection for her, I have forsaken my husband. Hence, O Lord, grant the boon that has been cherished in her mind.

Sūta said:

73-74. On hearing her words the Moon-crested Lord said to the princess in words as majestic as the rumbling of a cloud:

“Dear daughter, it behoves you to stop further penance at my instance. O fair lady, choose your boon that has been cherished in your mind always. I shall grant it now, O gentle lady, even if it is not to be given (ordinarily).”

Ratnavatī said:

75. This water-pond is meritorious and is adorned by clusters of lotus plants.

76. It is the place where this chaste Brāhmaṇī has been engaged in her penance always. Let this Tīrtha become well known after her name.

77. O Lord of Devas, if a person takes his holy bath here with great faith, let him have his perpetual residence in Heaven.

78. Let my pond be named Śūdra Tīrtha after my name. Let it have the same power as the previous one.

79. In our virginity great penance should be performed everyday by us. You, the most excellent one of Suras, should be the one to be propitiated by us verbally, mentally and physically.

80. In the meantime, O Brāhmaṇas, the Liṅga of Maheśvara resembling the Sun pierced through the earth and came out.

81. Lord Maheśvara who had become pleased by their excellent penance and who is fond of his devotees, spoke to them eagerly himself:

82-85. “The pair of these Tīrthas will become well-known in all the three worlds. Your Tīrtha shall be called Śūdrī Tīrtha and that of your companion Brāhmaṇī Tīrtha.

A person should take his holy bath in both the Tīrthas with great faith. He should collect lotuses from your Tīrtha and pure water from her Tīrtha. Then he shall bathe my Liṅga and adore it.

Afterwards, on the fourteenth lunar day in the bright half coinciding with a Monday in the month of Caitra, he should adore it with lotus flowers. He will have long life.

Even if he has committed great sins, he shall become rid of all those sins."

86. After saying thus, the Lord vanished. The two lady companions stayed there and performed penance for ever.

87. They continued the penance for a hundred Kalpas without old age and death. Even today they are seen in the firmament in the form of stars.

88-89. Ever since then the pair of the Tīrthas became reputed all over the earth. People from far-away places came there and had their holy ablution in both of them. After adoring that Liṅga they went to Heaven even when they were overwhelmingly sinful. Undoubtedly, it was due to the power of the two Tīrthas.

90. In the meanwhile all holy rites such as Yajña, Dāna (gifts) and adoration of deities ceased to be performed in the human world.

91. On the other hand, the entire heavenly region became overpopulated (full) with human beings vying with Devas and attended by groups of Apsarās.

92. In the meantime, Dharmarāja came to the place where Brahmā was in Brahmaloka, chanting Vedic passages loudly.

93-94a. He placed before Brahmā two sheets well illustrated with pictures, one intended for listing sinners and the other listing virtuous ones. With great sorrow and distress, he spoke thus:

94b-100. "O Lord, there are two Tīrthas in the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara. There is a Tīrtha named Śūdrī Tīrtha and the other named Brāhmaṇī Tīrtha. It is adorned with clusters of lotuses. Further, there is the great Liṅga of Maheśvara. It is highly meritorious. By the power of these three, all men, even excessively sinful ones, go to heavenly abode. All Narakas of mine, Raurava etc., have become empty.

No one has performed Yajñas, no one made over any religious gifts nor did anyone perform the rite of offering libation to deities and ancestors and guests.

Hence I have abdicated all my powers assigned by you. Do employ someone else there proving himself more competent

than I. These two sheets prepared by me have become totally invalid."

On hearing these words the Lotus-born One summoned Śatakratu and said:

101-102. "At my behest, O Śakra, hasten to the human world. In the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara there are two excellent Tīrthas. One is called Śūdrī Tīrtha and the other Brāhmaṇī Tīrtha. There is another excellent thing, the Liṅga stationed there. Shower dust particles therein and destroy (bury) them quickly."

Sūta said:

103. On hearing these words, Śakra hastened to the earth and filled the two Tīrthas and the Liṅga with dust particles.

104. Even today in the Kali Age, men should take their holy bath, taking the holy dust thereof. They must apply it on the forehead as Tilaka for destroying all sins.

105. Manu, born of the Self-born Lord, has said thus: "On the fourteenth lunar day coinciding with Monday, a person should perform Śrāddha in both of them with great faith. Of what avail is Gayā Śrāddha unto him?"

106. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, thus I have narrated everything that I was asked about in regard to that Brāhmaṇī and Śūdrī.

107. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, he who devoutly listens to this or reads this shall undoubtedly be relieved of the sins of the day.

108. Which man has not become a Siddha by adoring that Liṅga? Who has not become a long-lived one? there is none who has become so (by resorting to a Tīrtha) elsewhere.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYNINE

Greatness of Eight Nāgara Families

The sages said:

1-2. O Sūta, thirty-five million Tīrthas are said by leading sages as existing all over the earth. O highly esteemed one, how can (man) of limited life span obtain the benefit of taking holy ablution in all those Tīrthas at the advent of the Kali Age?

Sūta said:

3-4. O Brāhmaṇas, three sacred places (Kṣetras) have been extolled here. So also three great Araṇyas (forests), three Purīs (Cities), three Vanas (sylvan parks), three Grāmas (villages), three other Tīrthas along with three Parvatas (mountains) and three Mahānadīs (great rivers). These are all destructive of all sins.

5. They are situated in the mortal world and they accord the benefit of all the Tīrthas. He who takes his holy bath in all these, shall attain the benefit of all.

6. Prajāpati has said this that he who resorts to one set of three for holy bath out of the entire twenty-four (i.e. 8 *Triṅkas*) shall attain the benefit of all the Triṅkas.

The sages said:

7-8. O highly esteemed one, what are the three Kṣetras? What are the three Araṇyas? What are the three well-known Purīs? What are the three Vanas? What are the three Grāmas? What are the Tīrthas? What are the Nagas (mountains)? What are the Sarits (rivers)? O Sūta, describe all these in detail citing their names.

Sūta said:

9-10. The first excellent Kṣetra is well-known as Kurukṣetra. Hāṭakeśvara Kṣetra is glorified as the second one. Prabhāsika (Prabhāsa) is the third Kṣetra, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. All these three Kṣetras are meritorious and destructive of all sins.

11-12. By visiting these in accordance with the injunctions

thereof, a man is rid of sins. If a devotee takes his holy bath in these Keṣetras with any cherished mental desire, the same is attained. O Brāhmaṇas, he becomes one having the ablution in all the twenty-four (cited before).

13. One is the Puṣkara Araṇya. The other is Naimiṣāraṇya. O Brāhmaṇas, Dharmāraṇya is glorified as the third.

14. He who bathes in these three attains (the benefit of bath in all the twenty-four holy places).

15. (Out of cities) one Purī is Vārāṇasī. The second is Dvārakāpurī. The city named Avantī is the third one. It is well-known in all the three worlds.

16. A man who takes his holy bath in these Purīs gets the benefit of all the twenty-four.

17. Vṛndāvana is one Vana (sylvan park). Khāṇḍava is the second Vana. Dvaitavana¹ is well-known all over the earth. It is the third Vana.

18. He who takes his holy bath in these three Vanas, attains the benefit of all the twenty-four.

19. Kalpa (Kalāpa) Grāma is remembered as the first Grāma. Śaligrāma is remembered as the second. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Nandigrāma² is well-known as the third.

20. He who takes his holy bath in these three Grāmas attains the benefit of all the twenty-four.

21. Agnitīrtha is remembered as one Tīrtha. Another is Śuklatīrtha. The third one is Pītītīrtha. It is a great favourite of Pītṛs.

22. He who takes his holy bath in these three Tīrthas has the benefit of all the twenty-four.

23. Śrīparvata is remembered as the first Parvata. The second is Arbuda (Mt. Abu). The third one is well-known by the name Raivata³. It is an excellent Parvata.

24. He who takes his holy bath in these three, attains the benefit of all the twenty-four.

25. Gaṅgā is remembered as the foremost Nadi (river). Another one is Narmadā. Sarasvatī is the third river. It originates from Plakṣa (tree).

26. He who takes his holy bath in all these attains the benefit of all the twenty-four.

1. Near Deoband, Saharanpur District, Uttar Pradesh—De p. 58.

2. Nandgaon in Oudh, 8 miles south of Fyzabad, U.P.—De p. 138.

3. Mt. Girnar near Junagadh, Gujarat.

27. A man who takes his holy bath in all these (twenty-four) shall attain the entire benefit of all the thirty-five million (sacred places).

28. A man who bathes in one of a set of three, attains the benefit of the entire Trika.

29. Thus, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, everything that I was asked, i.e. about the benefit from the Tīrtha that is obtained by men on the earth, has been told succinctly.

30. Now what should I tell you? Tell me without delay.

The sages said:

31. O Sūta, all the Tīrthas situated in Hātakeśvara Kṣetra have been described by you to us in full detail.

32. So also the innumerable Āyatanas (shrines). It is not possible to take holy bath in all these even in the course of a hundred years.

33. No man can take bath in accordance with the injunctions. It is clear. O highly intelligent one, it is equally not possible to visit all the shrines.

34-35. The benefit one derives is only for the day on which he takes the bath. Even in Kṛta Yuga, men are said to be short-lived. So also in Tretā and Dvāpara. There is hardly any need to say about Kali Age. O Sūtanandana, know that men are short-lived (in all Yugas).

36. How can they, therefore, obtain the benefit of the holy ablution in all the Tīrthas? How can they obtain the benefit of viewing the deity (everywhere)—especially if they are poor?

37. Is there any remedy in this respect. Human or divine, whereby merit can be acquired by all easily.

Sūta said:

38. In this matter, Viśvāmītra, the great sage, was formerly asked by king Ānarta who had gone to his hermitage.

The king said:

39. O holy Sir, there are innumerable Tīrthas here. Procedures enjoined in the case of the holy ablution in all those are distinct and separate.

40. The difference is in respect of month, day of the week or lunar day in different Tirthas as explained by excellent sages. Rules regarding Dāna are also mentioned differently as in the case of holy ablution.

41. A visit to the deities has also been proclaimed separately. O sage, it is not possible to obtain the benefits of all of them by any one person, O sage.

42. It is impossible to achieve (this) even in the course of a hundred years. It is all the more so in the course of a few days. Hence, O highly esteemed one, do mention an easy means for all embodied beings.

43. Can any man taking his holy ablution even in one Tirtha obtain the benefit arising from the holy ablution in all the Tirthas?

44. Similarly, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, can men attain the benefit of viewing all the deities, when a single deity has been viewed?

Sūta said:

45. On hearing it and after meditating for a long time, the great sage Viśvāmitra said: "Listen, O leading king, I shall tell you everything including the secret.

46. There are four superior and most important Tirthas here. The benefit arising from the holy ablution in all the Tirthas is attained if the holy ablution is taken and Śrāddha is performed later in all the four of them.

47-49. Further, there are twenty-seven Liṅgas situated here itself beginning with Siddheśvara Liṅga. They are destructive of all sins. If all of them are viewed with devotion and sanctified mind, the benefit of viewing all the deities (of all the worlds) will be attained. If a devotee views and adores one excellent deity it is as efficacious as though all the twenty-seven Liṅgas have been adored by him."

The king said:

50. O excellent sage, what are those four important Tirthas by taking ablution in which a man obtains the benefit of all (Tirthas)?

Viśvāmitra said:

51. There is a meritorious Kūpikā (a small well) wherein Gayā takes resort on the fourteenth lunar day in the dark half as well as on the New-Moon day.

52. O highly esteemed one, particularly when the Sun is in the zodiac Virgo, Gayā becomes disgusted with the various kinds of Śrāddhas performed by people on the earth (and resorts to this Kūpikā).

53-54. He who, with perfect faith, performs Śrāddha there on that day, O leading king, redeems the Pitṛs. The second Tirtha is remembered as Śaṅkha Tirtha.

55. A man who takes his holy bath there on the first day of Māgha and visits Śaṅkheśvara thereafter attains the benefit of all.

56-57. The third Tirtha named after me (i.e. Viśvāmitra) has also become important. After bathing here, a devotee should visit Hara installed by me, named Viśvāmitreśvara, on the eighth lunar day in the bright half of Nabhasya (Bhādrapada). He attains the benefit of all.

58. The fourth Tirtha is well-known as Śakratirtha. It is Bālamaṇḍana (?). A devotee should bathe there on the eighth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina and visit Śakreśvara for five days. He attains the benefit of all.

The king said:

59. O highly esteemed Brāhmaṇa, tell me the procedure concerning Gayākūpī in full detail. My faith therein is great.

Viśvāmitra said:

60. On a New-Moon day when the Sun is in the zodiac Virgo, a devotee should perform Śrāddha devoutly. He shall redeem his Pitṛs.

61-62. The Śrāddha should be performed in accordance with the injunctions of Bharṭṛyajña through Brāhmaṇas hailing from the same holy spot.¹ If the procedure enjoined by Bharṭṛyajña is neglected and the man performs Śrāddha in accordance

1. The author of the Purāṇa guards the economic interests of the local (Vādṇagar) Brāhmaṇas.

with another (set of) injunctions excluding the Brāhmaṇas hailing from the same holy spot or retaining the impure ones though hailing from the same spot, he is a deluded soul. His aforesaid Śrāddha becomes futile.

63-64. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, if one gets Śrāddha performed through ignorant Brāhmaṇas or through Brāhmaṇas hailing from other holy spots, that Śrāddha becomes futile like a dance shown before a blind one, or a song sung near a deaf person or like rain showered on arid land.

It is the truth that is mentioned by me. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, one may very well perform Śrāddha through (local) foolish Brāhmaṇas but even those who are well-versed in all the four Vedas should be excluded if they hail from another holy spot.

65. In the course of divine rites or the rites regarding Pitr̥s and in the rite of *Somapāna*, particularly a man going over to another land has to perform Śrāddha. He should do so in front of the sacred fire and not before another Brāhmaṇa (i.e. one hailing from another holy spot).

66. Or, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, one should perform Śrāddha after making Baṭus (bachelor Brāhmaṇas) sit on Darbha grass. Monetary gifts and food should be given to local people even after some delay.

67-69. O excellent king, just as a water-pot filled with Pañcagavya becomes spoiled even by a drop of liquor falling into it, so also the Śrāddha is destroyed if a local Brāhmaṇa who is not pure, although conversant with the four Vedas, sits in the centre of many pure Brāhmaṇas. O king, the Śrāddha shall become spoiled by one outsider sitting in the middle of many (local pure ones).

70. Hence by all means one should call only pure Brāhmaṇas.

71. If men of good qualities are not available, one may fetch a local foolish Brāhmaṇa, one with deficiency in limbs or having superfluous limbs. But he should not be an impure, spoiled one or an outsider.

72. When a virgin is given away in marriage or when a Śrāddha is performed, only a noble (pure) Brāhmaṇa should be fetched always, if one wishes for one's welfare and prosperity, O excellent king, he too shall be one endowed with purity.

73. Like Aśvattha among trees and Hari among deities,

those hailing from the eight families (*Aṣṭakulodbhava*) are the principal ones among the Brāhmaṇas of excellent holy spots.

74. The *Aṣṭakulodbhavas* (Brāhmaṇas of eight families) are the principal ones among the Brāhmaṇas of excellent holy spots like Vajra (Thunderbolt) among weapons and the ocean among lakes.

75. The *Aṣṭakulasambhavas* are the principal ones among the Brāhmaṇas of excellent holy spots like Uccaiśśravas among horses and the vehicle of Śakra (i.e. Airāvata) among elephants.

76. An *Aṣṭakulika* is the most excellent one among all Brāhmaṇas of the same holy spot like Gaṅgā among rivers and Arundhatī among chaste women.

77. The *Aṣṭakulika* is remembered as the most excellent one among Brāhmaṇas of the same holy spot like Bhāskara (sun) among planets and the Moon among stars.

78. The *Aṣṭakulika* is the most excellent one among the Brāhmaṇas hailing from the same holy spot like Meru among mountains and excellent Brāhmaṇa among bipeds (men).

79. The *Aṣṭakulika* is the most excellent one among the Brāhmaṇas hailing from the same holy spot like Garuḍa among birds and lion among denizens of forests.

80. After understanding this perfectly, O king, an *Aṣṭakulodbhava* should be employed in Śrāddha and Yajña rites and even more so in the rites of marriage.

81. O king, on seeing a Brāhmaṇa from *Aṣṭakula* at the foot of the altar, his Piṭṛs dance and Pitāmahas shout excitedly.

82. Again they say delightedly: "What will our daughter's son give us? Only water mixed with Darbha and gingelly seeds, and that too anticlock-wise."

The king said:

83. O highly intelligent one, the excellence of *Aṣṭakulas* has been mentioned by you. Do tell us. Is the excellence in all the Nāgaras?

84. The reason thereof will not be insignificant, O excellent one among Brāhmaṇas.

Viśvāmitra said:

85. O great king, the words uttered by you are true. There are other Nāgaras too who have mastered the Vedas and Vedāngas.

86-87. They deserve prominence in Śrāddha and they deserve eminence in Yajñas. Especially they are worthy of being given one's daughter in marriage but they (the *Aṣṭakulas*) have been set up there by Indra himself as the most important of all Nāgaras. Therefore, they have attained this pre-eminence in this holy spot.

88. Therefore, Śrāddha should be performed through those hailing from the eight families. If none of them is available, it can be performed through the (average) Nāgaras.

89. It should not be performed through Brāhmaṇas hailing from other holy spots even if they happen to be conversant with all the four Vedas. This stipulation has been laid by the noble-souled Bharṭṛyajña.

90. If anyone performs here either Śrāddha or Yajña through anyone other than a Nāgara Brāhmaṇa it shall be futile.

The king said:

91. There are numerous other Brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas and Vedāngas. They hail from the Madhyadeśa (Middle Land) and are quiescent. Others do hail from (other) Tīrthas.

92-93. But these have been excluded by Bharṭṛyajña especially from Śrāddha and Yajña. But the following have been cited as deserving Śrāddha: those deficient in limbs, having superfluous limbs, the doubly nude ones¹, dark-teethed ones, those having defiled nails, lepers, foolish ones and despised ones. Do clear this doubt of mine.

1. *Dvīmagña*—Fallen from the Varṇāśrama and Vedas and Śāstras. Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa states:

yeṣāṃ kule na vedoeti
na śāstrāṃ naiva ca vratam
te nagnā kirtitāḥ sadbhīḥ
teṣāṃ annam vigarhitam//

The editor of this Purāṇa gives two more quotations which means "utterly fallen from the path of dharma."

Viśvāmitra said:

94. O tiger among men, I shall state the many reasons. I shall mention how they incurred downfall due to the gifts of the wife of (the king of) Camatkārapura.

95. The Brāhmaṇas were away from the place when their wives accepted the gifts. Due to this the rift occurred between insiders (those who are within) and outsiders (those who are without).

96. Then they were cursed by Durvāsas who was furious like a serpent. Due to the arrogance arising from learning and affluence they were cursed down, i.e. became fallen through the curse.

97. When Kuśa ascended the throne, O king, great fright from the Rākṣasas was reported by the subjects to the noble-souled king.

98. A messenger was sent to Vibhiṣaṇa in Laṅkā who reported to him the panic caused among the subjects (due to the Rākṣasas).

99. Thinking about the life and activities of Rāma, he honoured Kuśa's behest. He surveyed the city of Laṅkā at the bidding of Rāma's (son).

100. The tormentors scattered over the ten quarters. With great fear they went to the world of Gandharvas.

101. Afraid of Vibhiṣaṇa they became unable to stay there. They came to the mainland and overran many holy spots.

102. In the administration of Kuśa they became highly frightened. They assumed the guise of Brāhmaṇas and came there.

103. Due to the greatness of the Vāḍavas (the Brāhmaṇas) they could not stay among them. Then they went to Camatkārapura, the resort of the fallen.

104. Staying among them they, due to their expertise in Māyā and their wealth and learning, they consumed half (the population of) the city.

105. Ever since then, they assumed the form and nature of Rākṣasas. At every step, they began to indulge in ruthless activities.

106. Therefore, O king, they are to be scrupulously avoided in the rites of Yajña and Śrāddha, O tiger among men, they may cause one to fall into Naraka.

107. O sinless one, I shall point out another defect of those people. O king, owing to their quelling of the fear from serpent-poison, Trijātas (illegitimate people) settled then.

108. Thereupon Camatkārapura became *Na-gara* (non-poisonous). There Trijātahood (the state of being Trijāta) became common to all.

109-110. For these reasons they were excluded by Bharṭṛyañña. A further reason is the fact that all cease to be pure by their contact. Cāṇḍalahood (the state of being a Cāṇḍāla) befell due to the birth from Kumbhaka.

The king said:

111. O Brāhmaṇa, do the favour of citing this reason. You have the knowledge of the entire universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings.

Viśvāmitra said:

112. In this context I shall tell you another story of a past incident for which all the other excellent Brāhmaṇas were excluded by Bharṭṛyañña.

113. In the city of Vardhamāna there was a Cāṇḍāla named Kumbhaka. He belonged to the meanest caste. He was a merciless practitioner of sinful activities.

114. Once he begot a son. Though he (Kumbhaka) was hideous, the son was very handsome as a result of the previous Karmas.

115. The father was tawny-eyed and very dark-complexioned, O king. He was in the prime of youth. The son was an expert in all activities and was characterized by all good features.

116. Like the moon in the bright half of a month, he grew up fast. Further, the boy of handsome features was praised by all the people. Having observed the people of his family for a long time, he became detached and disgusted.

117. Out of distress, he wandered over other lands and ultimately reached Camatkārapura in the guise of a Brāhmaṇa. In the course of all rites, he used to have regular bath. He sustained himself through the food received as alms.

118. In the meantime, there was a Brāhmaṇa named Subhadra, O king. He belonged to the Chāndogya Gotra and was well-known as a Brāhmaṇa of esteemed holy vows.

119. He was a Nāgara who had mastered the Vēdas and Vedāṅgas. He used to perform Yajña throughout the year. A daughter was born to him with twice the usual number of teeth.

120-121. Further she was hideously terrible with three breasts. She had a circle of curly hairs on the back. O king, even a poor miserable man of no high family did not accept the girl when offered, because she was sure to devour her husband within six months.

122. Sāmudrikas (persons who could foretell future through marks on the body) say that a girl with twice the usual number of teeth will cause the death of her husband. There is no doubt that a girl with three breasts will cause the destruction of the family of her father-in-law. Hence she must be avoided from afar.

123. One who has a circle of curly hairs on her back shall certainly become unchaste and she will commit many sinful deeds. Hence one should avoid her.

124. On seeing her growing up, Brāhmaṇa Subhadra became utterly worried. He never had peace of mind.

125-128. "What shall I do? Where shall I go? How can she get a husband? Even after repeated requests no one accepts her.

Even a poor man, a sick and old Brāhmaṇa never accepts her because it has been laid down in the Smṛti texts by the great sages formerly in regard to a girl:

'A girl of eight years is called Gaurī, a girl of nine years is known as Rohiṇī and one of ten years is termed as Kanyā. Beyond this she is a Rajasvalā (a girl having menses).

On seeing a virgin turn into a Rajasvalā (without being married) all these three, namely the mother, the father and the elder brother, fall into Naraka."

129. Even as he was thinking thus, the low-caste one in the guise of a Brāhmaṇa came to the house for alms. He was seen by the noble-souled one.

130-131. On seeing his extraordinary features, he became surprised and so asked thus: "O Bhikṣuka (mendicant), where have you come from? Where will you go?

In spite of being endowed with such handsome features, why have you adopted the *Mādhukarī vṛtti* (the practice of bees i.e. begging for alms)? Tell me what is the name of your Gotra? What is your Pravara (lineage)?”

132-138. He said: “My native place is the great Gauḍadeśa and the native town is well-known by the name Bhojakaṭa.¹ It is inhabited by various kinds of Brāhmaṇas.

A Brāhmaṇa named Mādhava lived there. He was master of the Vedas. He is well-known as belonging to Vasiṣṭha Gotra and of Ekapravara. I am his son remembered as Candraprabha. When I was in my eighth year observing Vratas, my father, a master of the Vedas, met with his death. My mother entered fire along with him. Thereupon, I had *Vairāgya* (detachment) and set out from my own house.

I am wandering through the Tirthas. Thus I have come to your city. Now I will be going to the excellent holy spot Prabhāsa. It is the place where Lord Someśvara arrived after abandoning Kailāsa. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, neither the Vedas nor the scriptural texts have been learned by me. In the course of my pilgrimage I am begging for alms as well.”

Viśvāmitra said:

139-140. On hearing his words, he thought thus in his mind: ‘This is a Brāhmaṇa of excellent native place. His features are very fine and handsome. If he accepts my daughter, I shall definitely give her to him. Before the base girl becomes a Rajasvalā and destroys my family utterly, I have to give her away.’

141-142. He consulted his wife and spoke to that outcaste: “O Brāhmaṇa, if you are ready to accept I shall give my daughter to you. Further, I shall maintain both of you always.”

143. On hearing those words, the delighted low-caste fellow spoke to the excellent Brāhmaṇa: “I shall carry out your behest, O Brāhmaṇa, give me your daughter.”

144. Saying “So be it” he went away. His own daughter was given over to him in accordance with the injunctions in the Gṛhya Sūtras and the marriage was duly celebrated.

1. Bhojakaṭa was the capital of ancient Vidarbha (i.e. Eastern Maharashtra) Gauḍa is Bengal, its capital Gauḍa was near Malda—De, p.33, 63.

145. He considered himself blessed as one who had concluded his duties and gave him wealth, foodgrain, fields and cattle. He became delighted.

146. After marrying her, he continued diverse dalliances with her by means of foodstuff, beverages, excellent garments, ornaments and scented garlands.

147. But whichever path he took barking dogs pursued close behind him.

148. The dogs behaved with him as though with other low-caste people. If at any time anywhere he were to chant Vedic passages, blood used to fall down from the mouth of that evil-minded one.

149-150. In the meantime, all the people became suspicious and they spoke to one another: "Undoubtedly, he is a Cāṇḍāla. See these barking dogs going after him."

On hearing these words, Subhadra became worried.

151-152. Thinking that what they were saying was true, he was distressed much. He said: "Certainly, the husband of my daughter belongs to a low caste. Through his activities, it is known that what people say is true."

153. That man of good intellect thought thus day and night. He became the object of the scandals of the people for a long time thus.

154. On another day the foremost excellent Brāhmaṇas came to the Brahmathāna (Resort of Brāhmaṇas) accompanied by the Madhyaga. They told him to prepare for the purification so that their suspicion might be quelled.

155. Then those excellent Brāhmaṇas spoke to him through the Madhyaga even as he stood with a pale face in the centre of Brahmathāna.

156. "Mention the name of your family, Gotra and the Pravara in particular, your native place and land so that the purificatory rite of the Brāhmaṇas can be performed in your case."

157. He joined his palms in reverence. He was trembling completely with a sweating face. Looking down he spoke in flattering words:

158-162a. "In the eighth year after my conception my father passed away. My chaste mother entered the funeral fire along with him, abandoning me to wretchedness and grief.

I became disgusted with worldly life and undertook pilgrimage even during my boyhood, along with the other sages. I was moved by the misery due to the death of my father.

The Veda was not studied by me. The scriptural text was not read and discussed by me. In the course of my pilgrimage, I came to your city.

Through the evil-minded unholy Subhadra, my father-in-law, I know this, O Brāhmaṇas, that my Gotra is Vasiṣṭha.

Mine is Ekapravara, the native land is Gauḍa and the city is Madhupura (Mathurā, U.P.)."

162b-163. Thereupon, the Brāhmaṇas said: "If nothing about the family antecedent is known, the means for his purity is *Dhaṭa* alone (ordeal by balance).

So, you shall get on to the *Dhaṭa* for the sake of (confirming) your Brāhmaṇahood. After getting purified, enjoy the pleasures staying here itself."

164-166. He ventured to reply to all the excellent Brāhmaṇas: "I shall very well take up the ordeal of *Taptamāṣaka* (heated black gram pulse); or I shall jump into the fire or even swallow poison. I little care for the ordeal of balance which is very pleasant to carry out. I have no hatred or contempt for Brāhmaṇas, O Brāhmaṇas."

167. Those Brāhmaṇas laid down *Dhaṭārohaṇa* as the purificatory rite in his case. They fixed the next Sunday for the same. Then, O Brāhmaṇas, all of them went to their respective abodes. So also the Brāhmaṇa (Subhadra) and the low-caste one.

168. Then, O excellent king, he spoke in secret to his wife: "I have been found out as having been born in the caste of a mean fellow. I am going out of this land. You too come along with me."

The wife said:-

169-170. I would rather jump into fire. I will not come with you, O wretch of sinful intellect. I will not fall into the fire of Naraka knowingly.

I will not serve you who have been born in a low caste. O sinful wretch, this excellent holy spot has been completely defiled by you.

171. Further you have defiled the mansion of my father who performs Yajña throughout the year. Hence, go away before anyone detects you.

172. If not, O wretch of sinful conduct, you will meet with great danger.

173. Then at nightfall, due to the fear for his own life, he vanished in the desired direction wearing only the loin cloth.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED

Bharṭṛyajña Prescribes Expiatory Rites

Viśvāmitra said:

1-2. When it dawned and the disc of the sun rose up the daughter of the noble-souled one approached her father and mother crying all the while. With tears tormenting her eyes, she spoke in faltering words:

3-4. "O father, O mother, what a sin has been committed by both of you that I have been given in marriage to a low born, a sinner of wicked soul.

He has absconded at nightfall after revealing to me his real family. Hence, I shall jump into blazing fire."

5. On hearing her words, Subhadraka, the Dīkṣita (initiated one), fell on the ground like a tree broken by wind. He lay on the ground motionless.

6. He was repeatedly sprinkled with cold water. He regained consciousness with very great difficulty. He was surrounded by his kinsmen. Repeatedly beating his head, he lamented in different ways.

7-14. Then all those Brāhmaṇas who had become defiled through their association with him approached Bharṭṛyajña accompanied by him (Subhadraka). With humility they spoke loudly to him: "A Cāṇḍāla in the guise of a Brāhmaṇa remembered by the name Candraprabha was kept in his abode by Subhadra along with his daughter whom he had given to Candraprabha.

For a year and a half he had been employed in the rites

pertaining to deities as well as Pitṛs. The wretch of sinful activities was not found out so far. But now everything has become clear.

O highly esteemed one, the entire holy spot has been defiled due to the contact of Subhadra with the low-caste one. So do fix up a deterrent (restraining) punishment.

Food has been taken by some persons in his house. Water has been drunk by others. Still others took him to their house and gave him food.

Or, of what avail is much talk, O excellent Brāhmaṇa? There is no one who is not adversely affected by an illegitimate mixing up with that sinner.

O highly intelligent one, formerly this holy spot was rendered meritorious by you. You are senior to all, a veritable preceptor unto all. Hence, prescribe a means of purification for us."

15. Thereupon, he pondered over many Smṛtis and scriptural texts for a long time and recommended the expiatory rites for all those Brāhmaṇas.

16. He prescribed a hundred Cāndrāyanas to Subhadra who used to maintain sacred fires. He ordered him to give away all utensils and buy fresh ones.

17. In order to purify the middle of the house, he ordered a hundred thousand *Homas*. Self-immolation in fire was enjoined upon his daughter.

18. The noble-souled one declared that everyone who took food in his (Candraprabha's) house should perform as many Kṛcchras as the number of times he took food.

19. O king, Prājāpatya (expiatory) rites were enjoined upon those who drank water in his house, based on the quantity of water drunk there.

20. Prājāpatya rites were enjoined separately for the Brāhmaṇas and others who inhabited that region and so had been defiled by touching him.

21. Half of the same number was prescribed in the case of women and Śūdras and quarter in the case of children and old people. Earthen pots were to be given up altogether.

22. *Rasatyāga* (Eschewing tasty juices) was prescribed in the case of all the people. Ten million *Homas* were indicated to be performed in the manner enjoined in the Brahmarshāna for the purification of the entire Sthāna (holy spot) by means

of the collective wealth (or contribution) of the entire place.

23. Then he raised his hand and proclaimed in a loud tone to all those Brāhmaṇas hailing from the city:

24. "His entire possession should be given to Brāhmaṇas by Subhadra. A quarter of their possession should be given by those who took food in his house.

25. An eighth (part) should be given by those who drank water. A gift of cows should be made by those defiled by his touch. Monetary gifts in accordance with their capacity (was to be given) by the remaining people.

26. The Dikṣita should perform the Japa of a hundred thousand Gāyatrī Mantras. The Japa should be performed by the other Brāhmaṇas in the same proportion as in the case of monetary fine (or financial status).

27. I will perform three hundred *Prāṇāyāmas* every day, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. I will take food only once during six times of meals.

28. By the end of a year, there shall be purity regained. Thus everything is the result of the contact of that wicked-souled one."

29. After saying thus, he told the foremost excellent Brāhmaṇas through the *Madhyaga*. The *Madhyaga* orally conveyed this to those who were in the Brahmarshāna.

30. "From now onwards, if a Nāgara gives his daughter to another one without assuring himself that he is a Nāgara he will become fallen.

31. He will be *Āsrāddheya* (not worthy of invitation to a Śrāddha) and *Apāṅkteya* (not fit enough to be in the same row with other Brāhmaṇas) especially to the Nāgaras.

32. If any one offers Śrāddha to any one other than a Nāgara, his Piṭṛs will go away with averted faces along with the Devas.

33-35. This stipulation has been made by me with regard to all the Nāgaras. If any one imbibes *Soma* without another Nāgara as companion, undoubtedly that Nāgara drinks liquor. If anyone performs a Śrāddha rite without his concurrence all the Śrāddha rite shall be futile. If anyone feeds a Nāgara who is devoid of purity, in the course of a Śrāddha, the entire thing becomes futile.

36-37. Hence for the sake of the purity of their own holy

spot this purificatory rite should be performed every year by excellent Brāhmaṇas."

Viśvāmitra said:

Thus everything I was asked has been explained by me. I have explained how Bharṭṛyajña settled the qualification of the Nāgaras for presiding over Śrāddha rites and how he stipulated the conditions thereof.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED ONE

Decision on Problems Relating to Nāgaras

Viśvāmitra said:

1-5. Then all those Brāhmaṇas joined their palms in reverence, eulogized the highly intelligent Bharṭṛyajña and spoke these words: "It has been said by you that only a purified Brāhmaṇa deserves to be honoured in a Śrāddha and imbibing of Soma and further that only he is to be offered a virgin in marriage. But tell us the procedure of this purification. How is the purificatory rite to be performed in the case of a Nāgara as well as all others (Brāhmaṇas) of other lands also, whether born in the other land or born there itself, and if a Brāhmaṇa wishes to attain an equal status despite the fact that he is not aware of the father and ancestors. O highly intelligent one, speak this to us in full detail."

Viśvāmitra said:

6. O excellent king, on hearing the words of those Brāhmaṇas, Bharṭṛyajña expressed his considered views which were highly honoured (and accepted) by all.

Bharṭṛyajña said:

7. What has been asked by you all is a very important question putting an enormously onerous responsibility on me. Still, I shall explain it after making obeisance to the Self-born Lord.

8-9. If a person not aware of his father and ancestors comes from a far-off land and aspires for an equal status proclaiming himself to be a Nāgara, purificatory rite should be administered to him by quiescent, excellent and important Brāhmaṇas, placing a Brāhmaṇa hailing from Gartātīrtha in front (at the head).

10. If a person requests for purification, (it is likely) that some Brāhmaṇas will not offer him the same, either due to their desire, or anger, or hatred or due to their fear of a fall (blunder).

11-12. In that case, all of them will incur the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. Hence purificatory rite should be assiduously administered by an excellent Brāhmaṇa to the visitor especially when he comes from a far-off land. Such a purificatory rite is three-fold as explained by me.

13. Then though born in another land, he should be known as a pure Nāgara. First, the family of his father is to be purified. Then the family of the mother.

14. Then the conduct (is to be purified). A person purified in these three respects deserves an equal status.

PROCEDURE OF PURIFICATION¹

15. By the end of a year, purificatory rite of all Brāhmaṇas should be assiduously performed for the purity of one's own Sthāna (holy spot, native place).

16. For that purpose, in an auspicious season at the close of autumn, sixteen excellent Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the four Vedas should be pleased (appointed).

17. All the Brāhmaṇas should be quiescent with mental control and control of the sense-organs. A Brāhmaṇa hailing from Gartātīrtha should be placed in their middle.

18. The time should be before the end of the month of Kārttika (?) In front of the Brāhmaṇa from Gartātīrtha four pedestals should be placed. They must have all (good) characteristics. They are intended for the Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the four Vedas [or the pedestals should have four legs].

1. It is noteworthy that the cooperation of Brāhmaṇas belonging to the four Vedas and the recitation of various Sūktas of different Vedas is essential in this rite.

19. The first one (pedestal) is for the sake of a Bahvṛca (R̥gvedi) Brāhmaṇa. The next one is for a Yājuṣa. The other one is for a Śāmaga and the fourth one is for Ādya (the foremost one).

20-21. Another pedestal, the fifth one, is intended for the Mudrikā (Signet ring). The Bahvṛca should recite the following Sūktas (hymn-passages): Śrisūkta, Pāvamaṇa, Śākuna, Sūkta which has Viṣṇu for its deity, Pārāvata Sūkta along with Jivasūkta and also the Śāntika.

22-23. The Adhvaryu should recite the following passages: Śivasāṅkalpa as an aid to the acquisition of calmness and peace, the four types of R̥ṣikalpas, Maṇḍala Brāhmaṇas, Gāyatribrāhmaṇa, Puruṣa-sūkta, Madhubrāhmaṇa and Rudra Mantras along with the five ancillaries.

24-26. Devavrata pertaining to Gāyatrī, Somavrata, Sūrya-vrata, till the twenty-first stanza, Rathantara, Sauvrata, Viṣṇu Saṁhitā, Jyeṣṭha Sāman, the Rudra Mantras included in the Sāma Veda along with the Bhāruṇḍa Sāmans—all these should be recited by the Chāndoga. He will also recite other passages of Śāntika (conducive to peace) also such as Garbhopeniṣad, Skanda Sūkta and other passages.

27. The Ādya should recite Prāṇarudras along with Nīlarudras and other Mantras such as Nava-rudras and Kṣurikās.

28-29. Then accompanied by the chanting (declaration of the day being auspicious) and the sound of vocal and instrumental music, the person desirous of purity should go to the place where those Brāhmaṇas are present. He should wear white garments and garlands. He should smear himself with white sandalpaste. After bowing down his head he should address the *Madhyaga*:

30. "It behoves you to do me this favour. Do request all these excellent Brāhmaṇas, on my behalf, whereby they will grant purity."

31-32. Thereafter, the Brāhmaṇa hailing from Gartātīrtha should stand there bowing down humbly. He should request the Brāhmaṇas for the purity of that person desirous of purity. While doing so, he should be in touch with the hide of a cow. Then all the excellent Brāhmaṇas should be addressed (asked) by him:

33. "This Nāgara Brāhmaṇa has come from a far-off place

for the sake of purity. If all of you approve, the purificatory rite can be administered."

34. They should hint at the approval or denial only through the Vedic Sūktas and not through explicitly uttered words: "This is my utterance."

35. Then he saw that most of them (were well-versed in the Vedas). He saw Ṛgvedins, Adhvaryus, Chāndogyas and Ādyaś. (He then said:) O excellent Brāhmaṇas.

36. "O excellent Brāhmaṇas, if they are mentally pleased the words uttered are gentle and auspicious. The Sūktas are mild such as Vāruṇas and Aindraś indicating the auspiciousness as the outcome.

37-38. They are excellent and conducive to increase (development) and satisfaction. The Mantras are thus the signifying factors. If they do not feel mentally pleased (they are to chant) Raudra (pertaining to Rudra), Yāma (pertaining to Yama) and Nairṛtya (pertaining to Nirṛti). The Āgneyas (pertaining to Agni) are inauspicious; they cause destruction.

39. Those who are fools (ignorant) among these, not engaged in chanting the Vedas, (should indicate thus). If the excellent Brāhmaṇas are pleased, they will offer flowers.

40-42. If they are angry and so devoid of satisfaction, they should produce Sītākāra (a kind of hissing sound by drawing in the breath). Thus in all affairs the decision is to be made thus and not through impolite words as usually by men.

At the conclusion of the decision the sensible and learned *Madhyaga* should clap the hands thrice. Thus the decision is arrived at by all.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWO

Bhartryajña's Decision

Viśvāmitra said:

1-3. O excellent one among men, all the excellent Brāhmaṇas heard those words and waited with heads bowed down in humility. Urged by curiosity they asked him:

"The excellent Brāhmaṇas should proclaim the decision

about the person placed in the centre through the Vedic passages. They should eschew human words.

But why should the noble-souled *Madhyaga* clap the hands thrice? Do explain this entirely. Our curiosity is great.”

4. On hearing these words, Bharṭṛyajña spoke to those excellent Brāhmaṇas:

“May this be heard. I shall tell you the reason thereof.

5. No utterance of the Nāgaras present in the Brahmasālā as to whether it is auspicious or not can be untrue at any cost.

6. Hence it is through Vedic *Savanas* (Mantras) that the excellent Brāhmaṇas indicate the desirable and the undesirable, in the case of a person who seeks their decision.

7. So the *Madhyastha* (Referee) should put questions to the Brāhmaṇas frequently along with the occasion thereof until the decision is made.

8. If the utterance of those sitting in the Brahmasālā goes in vain, their greatness perishes and that leads to anger.

9. Hostility is the result of anger and this hostility causes sin. For this reason, O Brāhmaṇas, the *madhyastha* is frequently questioned.

10-12. Thereby, the collective unanimity of those Brāhmaṇas is achieved. Out of the three claps of hands, that the *Madhyastha* makes, the first one dispels the *Kāma* (lust) of those who ask. Through the second he eliminates their anger and through the third he eliminates their covetousness. For this reason, O Brāhmaṇas, the three claps of hands are to be made.”

The Brāhmaṇas said:

13. An Ātharvaṇa (a person well-read in the Atharva Veda) Brāhmaṇa is proclaimed as the fourth one. How is he then considered *Ādya* (first, foremost) in the matter of this question put to Nāgaras?

Bharṭṛyajña said:

14. O Brāhmaṇas, listen with great concentration. I shall explain why the Atharvā is mentioned by me as the first one in regard to this process of questioning.

15. Jealousy should not be entertained in this matter. It upsets one's place. This has been reviewed by me for the purity of a person in a particular place.

16. In the three Vedas named Ṛk, Yajus and Sāman, the Yajñas including Agniṣṭoma have been dealt with. They are Pāratrikas (having their benefit in the other world). Ābhicārikas (Rites connected with black magic) that are Aihika (having their benefit in this world itself) are not dealt with in the first three Vedas.

17. Everything connected with Ābhicārika has been mentioned in the Atharvaveda by Brahmā the creator of the worlds, for the benefit of all the people.

18. For the accomplishment of (worldly) tasks Atharva Veda should be looked into at the outset. For this reason that Veda is considered *Ādya* (first). Though it is the fourth in the accepted order.

19. Thus, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, everything that I was asked has been explained. All the tasks connected with the Pṛcchā (Questioning) should be carried out as one complete task.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THREE

Purification of Nāgaras

Ānarta said:

1-4. Tell me, O Brāhmaṇa (twice-born one), how this Nāgara who comes for the sake of purification before the Nāgaras attains purity?

Viśvāmitra said:

When the community has been set up at the instance of the Madhyastha, he (the stranger) should be asked: "Who is your father's mother? Tell us who is her father? Of what Gotra is he? What is his Pravara as remembered (by you)?" After knowing his family along with the Gotra and Pravara, the mother of that mother should be enquired about. So also she who happened to be the mother of that person (i.e. the great-grandmother).

5. In the course of the purificatory rite, she should be found out and known by the Brāhmaṇas scrupulously.

6. The father, grandfather and great-grandfather—these three should also be ascertained scrupulously.

7-8. So also in the family of the grandmother these three Brāhmaṇas should be ascertained the maternal grandfather, his father and also his father should be ascertained. The mother, maternal grandmother and her mother also should be ascertained. The mother of the paternal grandmother should be ascertained along with her husband.

9. After ascertaining the various branches of the family tree in due order, the root and the basis as though of a great banyan tree, should be entirely ascertained.

10. Benediction should be offered through Cātuṣcaraṇa Mantras (i.e. Mantras from all the Vedas) and the purity should be formally declared through a Sindūratilaka (the mark on the forehead with vermilion powder).

11. Then, O excellent king, after clapping the hands thrice, this should be uttered by the Madhyastha before the person (a stranger offering himself for the purificatory rite). He deserves the status in common with the others now.

12. Thereafter, they all should go to the *Agniśaraṇa* (fire-sanctuary) and propitiate *Hutāśana* (Fire-god) uttering the *Pañca Vaktra Mantra*. Afterwards the *Pūrṇāhuti* is offered. The Brāhmaṇas are to be given monetary gifts and fed in accordance with one's capacity.

13. When the Sindūratilaka is applied in the presence of *Brahmā* according to the utterance of the Brāhmaṇas, the *Pitṛs* will become contented, "Our family is now stabilized".

14. A deterrent punishment should be meted out to that person whose purity in all the branches traced down to the root is not established. A punishment befitting a Brāhmaṇa should be meted out by the excellent Brāhmaṇas.

15. Purity is granted to him in such a way as to avoid his being otherwise. The Brāhmaṇa, who is established thus becomes thereafter one deserving *Śrāddha*.

16. If someone gets *Śrāddha* etc., performed through an impure Brāhmaṇa, all his sacred rites become futile like *Homa* performed in ash. Even if that person happens to be hailing from the *Aṣṭakula* (the eight families of established purity) it shall be so; what then if the person happens to be a very ordinary one.

17. Hence by all means the Nāgara Brāhmaṇa should be proved and ascertained for the sake of the purity of one's own holy spot and family as well.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FOUR

Procedure of Preta Śrāddha

Ānarta said:

1-2. O Brāhmaṇa of excellent holy rites, the mode of performing the purificatory rite for those hailing from Nāgara families has been explained to us by you in full detail in response to our question.

Now explain the same for the conduct of one with the family untraceable. In the case of one who does not know his grandfather and also his maternal grandmother but who says that he is a Nāgara, how should the purification be conducted?

Viśvāmitra said:

3. For the very same purpose, O King, on behalf of a Naṣṭavaṁśa (one whose family remains untraced), Bharṭṛyajña was earlier asked by the Nāgaras in the same manner as I have been asked by you.

Viśvāmitra said:

4. If a person of untraceable family comes and says in the assembly. "I am a Nāgara", his conduct should be ascertained and then purity is to be proclaimed.

5. If the person habitually confines himself to those customs and mores of the Nāgaras, he should be considered a Nāgara.

6. For the sake of his purity, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, *Dhaṭa* (ordeal by balance) should be administered in his case. If he comes out successfully in the *Dhaṭa* ordeal, he shall be deemed to have attained purity.

7. He is a deserving person in a Śrāddha rite: he can be offered a bride in marriage; he can be considered worthy of

Somapāna and he deserves a position of equality in all the rites performed in the holy spot.

8. Thus, O excellent one among men, everything that I was asked has been explained as to how the second mode of purity is administered in the case of a Brāhmaṇa who cannot trace the members of his family. Hence, O great king, tell me what you desire to hear further.

Ānarta said:

9. How is it that though they too are Nāgaras, the Brāhmaṇas hailing from the *Aṣṭakulas* (eight eminent families) have become the most excellent of all and have been taken to be the most important?

10. Is it the power of their penance? Or born out of Yajña? Does it arise from their learning, O Brāhmaṇa, or from their readiness to make gifts?

Viśvāmitra said:

11. All of them are endowed with good qualities like the other Nāgaras. But their special quality is that they have been established by Śakra.

12. Therefore, they attained this eminence among all the Brāhmaṇas.

Ānarta said:

13. At what time were those Brāhmaṇas thus set up here? For what purpose? O highly intelligent one, explain to us in detail.

Viśvāmitra said:

14. Formerly, there was an excellent Dānava well-known as Hiraṇyākṣa. There ensued a great fearful battle between him and Śakra.

15. O great king, in that battle between Devas and Asuras, many heaven-dwellers and Dānavas were killed while they were vying with one another for victory.

16. When those Dānavas were overthrown (killed) in the course of the battle by Śakra, Śakra resuscitated them by means of the power of his *Vidyā* (power of re-suscitating).

17. But the Devas who were killed never regained their life. Once the Slayer of Vṛtra said to Viṣṇu:

18. "O Lord Janārdana, tell me the *Gati* (the goal) proclaimed in the case of those who were killed in *Dhārātīrtha* (Battlefield), through blows received directly from the front.

19. O Acyuta, tell me the *Gati* (goal reached), however it may occur, of those who were killed while engaged in fleeing with faces turned away."

Viṣṇu said:

20. Those who were killed in the *Dhārātīrtha* in the course of the great battle with faces (daring the enemies) have no rebirth as in the case (of trees etc.) when the seeds have been destroyed.

21. O Lord of Devas, those who are utterly frightened and are killed from behind and those who are captured as slaves by the enemies will become *Pretas* (ghosts).

Indra said:

22. Some Devas were killed while fighting with faces straight (towards enemies). Others were also seen by me who had averted their faces (turned back) and were killed. O Lord, will there result ghosthood in the case of all the *Dāṇavas*? Or not?

Viṣṇu said:

23. Undoubtedly, O Thousand-eyed One, those persons killed in the battle with faces averted (while running) become ghosts whether they are Devas or human beings.

24. Ghosthood is inevitable in the case of those who meet with death due to poison, fire, action of those who kill members of their own family, suicide, and attacks by fanged and horned animals. This is the truth. There is no doubt about it, O Lord of Suras.

Indra said:

25. O Lord, how can they have salvation from the terrible state of ghosthood? Mention this to me fully so that I can endeavour for it.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

26-27. Śrāddha at Gayā is enjoined in their case when the Sun is in Virgo, O Lord of Suras, on the fourteenth day in the dark half of Nabhasya (Bhādrapada). They shall perform it devoutly as laid down by Pitāmaha. Thereafter, they attain salvation.

Indra said:

28. O Slayer of Madhu, why is Śrāddha performed on that day in the case of those who are killed with weapons? State this in detail.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

29-30. On that day Śambhu was formerly requested by Bhūtas, Pretas, Piśāscas, Kūṣmāṇḍas and Rākṣasas: "For one day, to-day, O Lord, when the Sun is in Virgo grant us the permission so that we will have a year-long satisfaction when Śrāddha is offered by the members of the family. Do take pity on us, the wretched ones."

Śrī Bhagavān said:

31-32. If a member of the family performs the Śrāddha on this day, on the fourteenth lunar day in the dark half of Nabhasya (Bhādrapada), you will have great satisfaction lasting for a year. When the member born in your family goes to Gayā and performs Śrāddha you will have salvation thereby.

33-34. Pitāmaha says that if no Śrāddha is performed on that day unto the Pitṛs who were killed by weapons those Pitṛs will be miserable. They will be distressed due to hunger and thirst continuing for a year even when they are in heaven.

35. Hence with all efforts one should perform Śrāddha on that day. Whatever is performed with another in view goes to Pretas.

36-37. Thereupon, that lunar day was granted to them by the Lord (Here the text is corrupt). When the Śrāddha rite is performed in the case of someone other than the one killed with weapons (the desired result occurs). A person may fight in battle with straight face but sometimes his mind wavers when he is struck with sharp weapons.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIVE

Importance of Gayā Śrāddha

Viṣṇu said:

1-3. After understanding everything in this manner, O Thousand-eyed One, act according to my statement, if those who are killed in the battle are dear to you. They had been fighting in front of you. Propitiate them by means of Gayāśrāddha so that they will get rid of Pretahood. So also in the case of those who were fleeing and so were hit on the back and killed.

Indra said:

4. Every year Pitāmaha goes to Gayā on that day and performs Śrāddha unto the Pitṛs of divine forms.

5. Therefore, O Lord, how can I go there for the performance of the Śrāddha rite? Hence tell me, O Janārdana, some salvation-yielding Tīrtha on the earth so that, at your instance, I can go there for their Śrāddha.

Viśvāmitra said:

6. Thereupon, Janārdana meditated for a long time and said to him, "There is a Tīrtha superior even to that in merit.

7. It is situated in the centre of the Kūpikā in the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara. On the New-Moon day, O Lord of Devas, and on the fourteenth day too Gayā reaches there accompanied by all the other Tīrthas.

8. A man who performs Śrāddha there when the Sun is in Virgo and that too through Brāhmaṇas born of the eight eminent families, shall redeem his Pitṛs.

9-10. This shall be the result even when the Pitṛs are in the state of Preta. All the more so, if they are stationed in heaven? The Brāhmaṇas hailing from that holy spot and born of the eight eminent families are now on the Himālaya mountain performing a severe penance. They have gone there because they were afraid of the Dāna given by the Lord of Ānarta.

11-12. Address them in all earnestness along with the expedients beginning with Sāma (conciliatory remarks). Take them with you and go to that holy spot. In front of them,

perform the Śrāddha duly. Thereby, you will attain the desired result. After having come, they also will be happy.

13. For the sake of Śrāddha they are worthy of being honoured by us also as well as by you.

On hearing it Śakra was satisfied at once.

14. With Himavān as his destination, he set out in haste. O leading king, Vāsudeva went to the Ocean of Milk then.

15. After reaching Himālaya Śakra met the Brāhmaṇas born of the eight eminent families as indicated by Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIX

Importance of Bālamaṇḍana

Viśvāmitra said:

1-2. At the instance of Viṣṇu, Indra rode on his Airāvata, The lordly elephant comparable to a mountain, and came to Himālaya.

There he saw the sages hailing from Camatkāra (pura), who were observing restraints and practising control of the senses. They were characterized by righteous conduct. They were in the stage of Vānaprastha and free from lust and anger.

3. A few Brāhmaṇas among them took food on alternate days. Others took food once during six meal-times (i.e. three days). Others were engaged in Cāndrāyaṇa.

4. Some were *Āsmakuṭṭas* (those who removed husk from paddy by means of stones and ate them). Others were *Dantolūkhalins* (those who used their teeth as mortar and pestle). Some took in withered dry leaves. Others had only the intake of water. Still others took in only air. Thus they performed severe penance.

5. The excellent Brāhmaṇas saw Śakra coming. He was duly honoured by the Cāraṇas and Siddhas. He was one who had not been seen by them before.

6. Then all the Brāhmaṇas were told by the people in the neighbourhood of that hermitage:

7. "Here comes Śakra to your hermitage, O Brāhmaṇas. May honour be offered to him as enjoined by knowers of scriptures."

8. Thereupon, all those Brāhmaṇas came face to face with him immediately. Their eyes beamed with wonder. They stood by with palms joined in reverence.

9-10. They welcomed him in accordance with the injunctions laid down in the Grhya Sūtras. With their delight indicated by the hairs standing on their ends, all of them spoke humbly: "O Lord of Devas, you may not be keenly desiring anything. What may be the reason for your visit? We are eager to know."

Indra said:

11. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, I hope you are fully satisfied in the performance of Agnihotras penance, chanting of the Vedas and learning.

12. Why have you left the splendid holy spot of Hātakeśvara abounding in Tīrthas and come to this mountain that causes distress due to snowfall?

13. So, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, you may all accompany me to the meritorious Camatkārapura full of many Brāhmaṇas.

14. I will now go there, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, at the bidding of Vāsudeva and perform Śrāddha in the Gayākūpa with due devotion.

15. I shall perform it in front of you all on the fourteenth lunar day in the Pitṛpakṣa (fortnight of the Manes, i.e. Dark half of Bhādrapada). It is quite clear that you have the ability to move through the firmament.

16. Hence come along with me accompanied by your wives, children and elderly people and also the sacred fires for the Agnihotra rites. Welfare unto you all. Your residence will be there.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

17-18. We will not go any more to that place Camatkārapura. There are other Brāhmaṇas there who have mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. There are Nāgara Yājñikas (performers of Yajña). They are devoted to Smṛtis and Śrūti. If you have true faith in Śrāddha, perform it before them.

Indra said:

19. The few Brāhmaṇas there whom you glorified are really so. All of them have mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas.

20. They are rich in erudition and specialists in the performance of Yajñas. They are full of hatred and harsh in speech.

21. They are swayed by arrogance. They vie with one another with a desire to defeat each other. Day and night they indulge in vicious pleasures. They are far removed from a life of pious penance.

22. You have all good qualities and have been commended by Viṣṇu. Hence, all of you should come along with me.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

23. It was for that very reason i.e. because of that defect, that we left our own native place there, (though) it is abounding in many Tirthas and it is a guide unto the path of heaven.

24-25. O Purandara, if we are to come there along with you, all our kinsmen engrossed in lust and hatred will commit crimes against us at every step day by day. They are full of the defect of jealousy. They continually prattle in harsh words.

26. That will lead to anger and wastage of the power of penance that results from anger. Attainment of liberation is hindered thereby. So, O Lord, how can we go?

27. Further, there is a king there who is always engaged in dispensing gifts. The Lord of Ānarta is well-known all over the earth.

28. He always gives Dāna of various kinds such as elephant, horse, gold etc. If we refuse to accept it, he might get angry.

29. With the king infuriated and the kinsmen antagonistic, there cannot be the fulfilment of our penance. Therefore, our city was abandoned by us.

30. O Lord of Devas, if we accept the gifts of that king, there shall be loss of our penance thereby, this is mentioned by the Self-born Lord.

31. A *Cakrin* (oil-producer, monger) is on a par (in sinful activities) with ten *Sunās* (slaughter houses). A *Dhvajin* (distiller of liquor) is on a par with ten *Cakrins*. A *Veśyā* (courtesan) is on a par with ten *Dhvajins* and a king is on a par with ten *Veśyās*.

32. How can we accept gift from that sinful king like the other Nāgaras who are over-avaricious?

Indra said:

33. This is the power of that holy spot itself, of the place named Hātakeśvara, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. It has been always present.

34. This (animosity) between fathers and sons and kinsmen in particular, between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law and between sisters and wives of brothers (is always present).

35-36. The Lord named Hātakeśvara is underneath that city. It is his power whereby all the people become angry. Therefore, they hate and quarrel with one another. Was this not heard by you all that Rāma who came here along with Sitā and Lakṣmaṇa had great clash with them?

37. He became angry with Sitā and Lakṣmaṇa. O Brāhmaṇas, he used unutterable words for them and both of them also did the same for him.

38. If one stays there for a month avoiding anger, one shall attain salvation. Staying thus for five nights enables one to attain heavenly pleasures.

39. Hence, you all must come there along with me. Those Nāgaras will not exhibit jealousy in your case.

40. With my favour you too will not be angry with the people thereof, O leading Brāhmaṇas. This is the truth that I have uttered.

41-43. King Ānarta will not press you at all to accept gifts.

If people offer their daughters to your sons and grandsons, they will reap a thousand times more of benefits.

If anyone performs Śrāddha in front of you all in the Gayākūpī on the Amāvāsyā day when the Sun is in Virgo, the benefit that accrues to him will be a hundred thousand times more.

44-45. This will result from the Gayā Śrāddha. There is no doubt about it. It is the truth that I have uttered.

O excellent Brāhmaṇas, if you do not come there for the sake of the Śrāddha, I will curse you and that will cause obstacles in you penance. Understand this and come there along with me immediately.

46-47. On being told thus by Śakra, all of them, the eight eminent families of Brāhmaṇas named Kāśyapa, Kaundinya, Ukṣāṇāśa, two families designated Śārkava, two called Kāpiṣṭhala and Baijavāpa came (to Camatkārapura) with Indra, O king.

48. The Slayer of Pāka summoned all the Pitṛs including Agniṣvāttas and Viśvedevas and started with them.

49-51. He was endowed with perfect Śrāddhā and proceeded towards Camatkārapura.

At the same time, on the same day, Brahmā the grandfather of the worlds, set off to Gayā for the sake of Śrāddha. On coming to know that Vidhi had set off towards Gayā, Viśvedevas left the Śrāddha of Śakra and went to the place where the Grandfather (i.e. Brahmā) was present. After reaching that city, Śakra went to Gayākūpī.

52. Śakra with due faith took his bath and invoked for the sake of Śrāddha Viśvedevas and Pitṛs at the holy hour named *Kutapa* (the eighth of the fifteen Muhūrtas in a day).

53. In the meanwhile, the Pitṛs in the form of gods as well as those in the form of Pretas who were invoked by him arrived duly.

54. They came near the Brāhmaṇas in their visible forms. But Viśvedevas who had gone to Gayā did not come there.

55. Since Viśvedevas are to be honoured at the outset in a Śrāddha, Indra waited for them. He delayed the performance of the Śrāddha for their sake.

56. In the meantime Nārada, the excellent sage, came there and told Śakra who was expecting (desirous of) their arrival:

Nārada said:

57. O Śakra, Viśvedevas have gone now to the Śrāddha of Pitāmaha. They were seen delightedly proceeding towards Gayā by me.

58. On hearing it he became angry with them instantaneously. Standing in front of the Brāhmaṇas he said in harsh words:

59-60. "Oh, today I shall perform the Śrāddha without Viśvedevas! So shall all the men on the earth do. If anyone were to perform Śrāddha here placing Viśvedevas in front, his Śrāddha will become futile like the shower of rain in an arid land."

61. After saying thus, the Thousand-eyed One performed Ekoddiṣṭa (having the group as one unit in view) for all those Devas who were killed in the battle.

62. At the same time an unembodied voice, O excellent king, of those with whom in view that Śrāddha was performed, spoke:

63-66. "O Śakra, O mighty-armed Śakra, Śrāddha was performed by you for the sake of those who remained in the state of Preta. They have been relieved of Pretahood and they have gone to Svarga in divine forms, with your favour. Those who had already gone to Svarga, fighting in the great battle have attained salvation, O Vāsava, with your favour."

On hearing that utterance Vāsava was pleased very much. In his delight, he repeatedly praised the Tīrtha, "How wonderful is the Tīrtha! How wonderful is the Tīrtha!" In the meantime, the Viśvedevas came there eagerly.

67-68. O king, they came there after concluding the Śrāddha of Brahmā at Gayā. They spoke to the Slayer of Vṛtra, "O Śatakratu, perform the Śrāddha. Once again you must perform the Śrāddha. Without us, the benefit of a Śrāddha is not attained. We have come from very far for the sake of the Śrāddha after concluding the Śrāddha of Brahmā by whom we were invited earlier."

69. On hearing their words, Indra became furious. He spoke harsh words in a voice as majestic as a rumbling cloud:

70-73. "From today onwards, if anyone else in the mortal world performs Śrāddha with all of you at the outset, it shall become futile.

All the people will perform Ēkoddiṣṭa Śrāddhas alone. This convention has been now established by me in the human world.

I shall myself guard against the attack of Bhūtas, Pretas and Piśācas who pollute Śrāddhas and who were restrained by Viśvedevas (until now).

After assiduously combining the Śrāddha with the physical form of the Yajamāna (person performing Yajña) all of them will be struck down by me. They will be then driven away quickly."

74. After saying this to the Viśvedevas, the Thousand-eyed

One spoke to all those Brāhmaṇas: "The Śrāddha rite should be performed by you and the other men without Viśvedevas."

75. When the leading Brāhmaṇas assented to it by saying, "So it shall be", Viśvedevas became extremely distressed. They lamented shedding profuse tears flooding the whole earth.

76-77. O king, when the earth was flooded by their hot tears, all the living beings and the innumerable eggs (were tossed about). From those eggs, living beings of terrible features came out. They had black teeth, piked ears and hairs standing up. They were terrible with their red eyes. Then they spoke to Viśvedevas, O king:

78. "All of us are hungry. Food must be certainly given by you, because we have been created by you. We will not request anyone else for food."

Viśvedevas said:

79. Can there be any Śrāddha without us on the earth which can provide food unto you with great faith?

80. After saying thus about the Śrāddha, O king, the extremely distressed Viśvedevas went to Brahmāloka. They bowed down to Pitāmaha and spoke to him in piteous tone:

81-82. "O Lord, we have been excluded from all Śrāddhas by the Enemy of Bala (Indra). Since, on being earlier invited by you, we had come to your Śrāddha at Gayā, the Thousand-eyed One (Indra) has become furious. So we have come to you. Do this favour to us that we may be fully entitled for participation in Śrāddha."

83-85. On hearing these words, Brahmā felt great compassion for them. He took with him all the Viśvedevas accompanied by Kūṣmāṇḍas (the beings mentioned in verse 77 above) and went to the place where Śakra was present after performing all the Śrāddha rites of the Heaven-dwellers with the intention of undertaking pilgrimage.

Seated in his vehicle of the swan and accompanied by the Viśvedevas, Brahmā reached that place.

86. On seeing that the Lotus-seated Lord had arrived there, Śakra took *Arghya* and *Pādyā* and hurriedly approached him and stood in front of him.

87-90. He bowed down his head humbly and prostrated before him. With palms joined in reverence, he said:

"O Pitāmaha, welcome to you. Merely by your vision, I have quickly understood my three births. I had performed auspicious rites before in the same manner as I do now. I shall also perform the same in the next world also. This has undoubtedly become clear.

O Lord, tell me quickly the cause of your visit. Though you have no specific desire, I shall carry out everything you may command me."

Brahmā said:

91. O most excellent one among Suras, without these Viśvedevas even my Śrāddha cannot be duly performed. Yet they have now been excluded from Śrāddha by you!

92. What has been done by you is not proper. By doing thus you have made the Vedas and the Smṛtis unauthoritative.

93. O Śakra, they were invited by me for the purpose of the Śrāddha earlier and only afterwards by you. Hence, these noble-souled ones are not to be blamed. They are free from faults.

94. Hence, O Lord of Suras, endeavour for the release of these from that curse so that all these will be entitled for the Śrāddha. They are very much distressed.

95. Earlier, this had been proclaimed by me to all the Brāhmaṇas that the Śrāddha performance with these (i.e. Viśvedevas) will be fruitful.

96. Then why do you render my statement false?

Indra said:

97. O Pitāmaha! It was only through a fit of anger that these have been cursed by me. Hence, manage everything in such a way as to make me truthful in my statement.

Brahmā said:

98. O Vāsava, I shall manage everything so that your statement also becomes true and the purpose of the Viśvedevas is also served.

99. What you enjoined as the Śrāddha without the Viśvedevas shall be the Ekoddiṣṭa one. Men will perform it on the earth.

100. They will perform it, O Lord of Devas, on the day when you performed the Śrāddha unto those killed with weapons i.e. on the fourteenth day in the Pretapakṣa.

101. At my instance, the Śrāddha of Nāgaras performed without Viśvedevas on the *Kṣayāha* (i.e. the fourteenth day in the dark fortnight) shall also be auspicious.

102. On other occasions, if the Śrāddha is performed without them, I aver that it shall be fruitless. There is no doubt about it.

103. If any man performs on that day any Śrāddha except for one killed with weapons, that Śrāddha will be the food of Bhūtas (goblins).

Viśvāmitra said:

104. When Śakra assented to it, the polite and humble Viśvedevas said to Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds :

105-108. "These sons were born out of our very tears. To them, distressed with hunger, O Lord, the food was assigned by us: We were angry with Vāsava and we assigned to them as food the Śrāddha that excludes us. These words uttered by us should be true.

O Pitāmaha, manage it in such a manner as to make true our statement as well as that of Vāsava. Fix up splendid food for us, whereby there shall be excellent satisfaction.

With your favour, O Lotus-born Lord, let there be the contentment of all these."

Padmaja (Lotus-born Brahmā) said:

109-111. At the time of Śrāddha, a line is drawn with sacred ash underneath the food plates of Brāhmaṇas. These (your sons) should avoid them. Whether it be Ekoddiṣṭa, Pārvaṇa (occurring at the religious Parvas such as Full-Moon, New-Moon etc.) or Vṛddhiśrāddha (that performed on prosperity such as birth of a son, marriage etc.), whatever is outside of the line marked with sacred ash has been given over to these by me. I am so delighted.

After saying thus, Pitāmaha gave them a name.

112. "The earth is indicated by the word *Ku*. Since it had been sprinkled with tears, the *Aṇḍas* (Eggs) arose therefrom. These Ghanas (solid groups) were born of them. Hence, they will become well-known in all the three worlds as *Kūṣmāṇḍas*¹."

1. A distorted popular etymology.

113. He then grouped them into three and respectively entrusted them to Agni, Vāyu and Arka (Sun). Then he spoke these words:

114-115. "Through separate Homas uttering the three Ṛks (Mantras) well-known in the Yajurveda as *yad devā deva-heḍanam*¹ etc. etc. the offerings should be made over to these three. They will become satisfied thereby as enjoined by me. It is doubtless. In case of Koṭi Homa they will have their share from the middle."

116. After saying thus, the Four-faced One vanished. The Viśvedevas and especially the Kūṣmāṇḍas became glad.

117-118. It is because of the fear from Kūṣmāṇḍas that the protective marking through the sacred ash is done beneath the food plates of Brāhmaṇas. This is not followed in the case of the Śrāddha of Nāgaras because they do not like a loophole (gap). Listen, in their holy spot the protection through sacred ash has been prohibited by Bharṭṛyajña and Nāgaras out of courtesy followed it.

119-120. All those Nāgaras never make it (the line with sacred ash).

When the Four-faced Lord went to his abode Indra spoke to all those Brāhmaṇas hailing from Camatkārapura. With palms joined in reverence, he stood humbly before them and said:

121. "O Brāhmaṇas, may my word be listened to. Thereafter you should carry it out. I shall install a Liṅga of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas."

122. Then an excellent spot was pointed out to him by those Brāhmaṇas. After installing the Liṅga, he became glad and went to heaven.

Viśvāmitra said:

123. Thus, O Lord of men, everything that I was asked, has been narrated to you. This is the greatness of Gayākūpī. It bestows all cherished desires.

Ānarta said:

124. The greatness of Gayākūpī has been narrated to me by you. It behoves you to extol the greatness of Bālamaṇḍana now.

125. At which holy spot was that Liṅga installed by Śakra. O highly esteemed one, describe it to us. What is the benefit when it is visited?

Viśvāmitra said:

126-127. When the Brāhmaṇas were requested for the Liṅga and a splendid holy spot by the Thousand-eyed One (Indra); the highly meritorious Bālamaṇḍana Liṅga was shown by them. It was there that the sons of Diti named the Maruts were born.

128-129. They were destroyed by him alone earlier but they did not die. Diti had performed a penance there in her eagerness for excellent sons. After seeing the highly meritorious place already seen by him before and known to be meritorious the Lord of Devas spoke to Jīva (Bṛhaspati):

130. "O my preceptor, tell me quickly the day and time that shall be very auspicious so that I can install the Liṅga of Hara which shall not perish even at the time of pralaya."

131-133. After thinking for a long time, he said to the Consort of Śacī: "On the thirteenth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, when Sunday and the Puṣya constellation coincide, O Lord, install at my instance the Liṅga when the day has dawned splendidly. It is the desirable period. The divine Liṅga shall remain steady till the end of the Kalpa."

On hearing this, the King of Devas was extremely delighted.

134. In the vicinity of Bālamaṇḍana, he installed the Liṅga in the midst of chanting of *Puṇyāha* Mantras by Brāhmaṇas accompanied by sounds of vocal and instrumental music.

135. At the end of the Homa, he propitiated the excellent Brāhmaṇas and gave them as Dakṣiṇā, the excellent holy spot *Āghāṭa*.

136. It was situated on Māṅkūla (a desirable spot?) and was embellished by a beautiful rampart. O excellent king, he gave it as the common property of all the Brāhmaṇas.

137. Then he summoned the *Aṣṭakulika* Brāhmaṇas (belonging to the eight families) and spoke thus:

138. "You will have to take care of the Liṅga. For your

sustenance extending as long as the Moon and the Sun shine is being given by me, a grant of twelve villages which you should accept."

The Brāhmaṇas said:

139. O most excellent one among Devas, we will not carry out what you propose in connection with the management of the Liṅga. May the reason thereof be listened to.

140. A property belonging to Brāhmaṇas or to Devas particularly when it is on the border of a lake, may destroy all ancestors even if a small part of it is consumed (misappropriated).

141. If anyone born in our family is to consume it, he will cause our downfall. That is our great fear.

142-145. Thereupon, a *Madhyaga* (middleman), an excellent Brāhmaṇa, observed that Śakra who had earlier rendered help had become sad and vacant-minded. He was Devaśarman by name, very well-known by all his three Pravaras.

With palms joined in reverence, he said: "I shall look after your Liṅga, O Vāsava, who will perpetuate my race till the advent of Pralaya. As yet I have no son. A son (when) born to me shall be a knower of Dharma (righteousness) and appreciative of benefits received. He shall avoid (misappropriation of) property belonging to Devas."

On hearing this, Vāsava was delighted and he said to that excellent Brāhmaṇa:

Indra said:

146. A splendid son will be born to you. He will perpetuate your line. He shall be righteous, truthful and one who will avoid the (misappropriation of the) property of Devas.

147. All the sons born of that noble-souled Brāhmaṇa's family will have the same characteristic features. They will be masters of the Vedas. .

148. Something more I shall speak to you, O excellent Brāhmaṇa. Listen to my words: May the other leading Brāhmaṇas also who have assembled here listen:

149. At the bidding of the Four-faced Lord this excellent Liṅga having four faces has been installed by me in the Tirtha named Bālamaṇḍanaka.

150. If a person performs his holy ablution here and offers libations to the Pitṛs, they shall get propitiated as long as they are alive.

151-152. Twelve villages have been donated to the Lord by me. The Brāhmaṇas shall reside there and when there is an occasion for Vṛddhiśrāddha, they shall perform the first Śrāddha here. They will then perform later rites without any obstacle. Prosperity will accrue to them. If (this is) not (done), there shall occur obstacles.

153-154. The People living in those villages should come here with perfect concentration and mental purity on the thirteenth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Māgha. They should take their holy bath in the Bālamaṇḍanaka Tirtha and worship the Liṅga with concentration and excellent devotion. They will attain the greatest goal.

155. If even at a later time people oppress the villages donated to the Liṅga, they will meet with destruction.

156. On that day all the Tīrthas all over the earth including the oceans and lakes will arrive at the Bālamaṇḍanaka Tirtha.

Viśvāmitra said:

157. After saying this the Thousand-eyed One faced the Brāhmaṇas of the eight families angrily and spoke these words:

158. "Seven families of Brāhmaṇas from among you did not carry out my request. They have been ungrateful. For this ingratitude, I shall undoubtedly curse them.

159. The truthful Manu, the son of the Self-born Lord, has earlier stated thus referring to all ungrateful persons.

160-161. 'Means of redemption have been laid down by good people in regard to a Brāhmaṇa-slayer, an imbibor of liquor, a thief, a rogue and those who have broken their vows. There is no means of redemption in the case of the ungrateful. Brāhmaṇas, cows, women, children and ascetics, should not be killed.' So I am not killing these in spite of their great vulnerability."

162. Then the Chastiser of Pāka took up the Darbha grass and water in his hand and cursed those ungrateful excellent Brāhmaṇas.

163-164. "These excellent Brāhmaṇas will become poor at

my instance in spite of getting fortune. Through my devotees they may get their sustenance but their own successors will abandon those devotees. There is no doubt about it. These hard-hearted unmannerly voracious people have not carried out my request (so will their successors do)."

165. After saying this to the seven families of Brāhmaṇas he spoke to the remaining Brāhmaṇas hailing from the city:

166-167. "O excellent Brāhmaṇas, let some space be given to me in this very holy spot so that I can stay here for five nights at the end of the year.

It is for the purpose of the worship of this Lord so that human beings can be happy and for propitiating all you Brāhmaṇas (that I wish to stay here)."

Viśvāmitra said:

168. Then all those Brāhmaṇas showed him the space for his use. Later they said with great delight:

169-170. "O Śakra, you should come here and stay in the Brahmathāna (place assigned to Brahmā) for five nights. You should stay here for the benefit of mankind.

In this place, we shall celebrate a grand festival before you, that will accord much prosperity and everything desired to all. We shall sing and play on the instruments loudly. With scents, garlands and unguents, we shall propitiate the Brāhmaṇas."

Viśvāmitra said:

171. On hearing those words Pākaśāsana was delighted. After honouring all the Brāhmaṇas, he went to the heavenly abode.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVEN

Description of Indra-Festival

Viśvāmitra said:

1-2. Everything has been narrated to you, O king, regarding the sin-destroying greatness of Bālamaṇḍana, about which I was asked by you.

Here, O excellent king, if a single holy bath is taken on the thirteenth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, the merit of taking the holy bath in all the Tīrthas is acquired.

Ānarta said:

3. How is it that Śakra's stay on the earth is limited to five nights? As in the case of other Heaven-dwellers, it is not more than that, why?

4. What are those days at the close of the year when Śakra comes over to the earth. What is that month? Tell me all these things.

Viśvāmitra said:

5. May it be listened to, O king. I shall tell you the legend explaining why Śakra does not stay on the earth beyond the five nights.

6. Formerly in the Brhatkalpa there was Jayatsena, a Sureśvara (Lord of Suras). He destroyed the arrogance of Dānavas. He was the Lord of all the three worlds.

7-8. He was always honoured and adored in all the three worlds.

The beloved wife of Sage Gautama, named Ahalyā was unparalleled in beauty in the whole of the earth. Once, on seeing her, Śakra came under the influence of Kāma. He loved her intensely.

9. Everyday, O king, when Gautama went out along with noble-souled sages for bringing sacrificial twigs, Darbha grass or fruits, roots etc. he used to come down from the heavenly world and enjoy the love play.

10. Nārada, the excellent sage, narrated to him (Gautama) the story of what was going on between Śakra and Ahalyā.

11. On hearing it Gautama returned to his abode quickly and saw the Lord of Devas united with his wife.

12. On seeing Gautama, Śakra wanted to flee. In his extreme fright, he went out of the hermitage in the nude state.

13. On seeing her husband coming, Ahalyā too became extremely frightened, O king; with all her sense-organs agitated and upset. She stood by with face bent down.

14. Having clearly observed the misdeed of his wife, O great king, Gautama's eyes became reddened with anger and he cursed:

15-17. "Since you demeaned yourself to commit this despicable act of defiling my chaste wife, you shall become one without scrotum.

Ere long there shall be a thousand vaginas cropping up on your face. Thereby you shall be the ugliest in the whole of the three worlds consisting of the mobile and immobile beings.

Another thing, O Vāsava, if for doing worship you come to the mortal world, your head shall burst into a hundred pieces."

18. After cursing Śakra thus, the sage repeatedly rebuked Ahalyā with his eyes turned red due to anger and spoke to her:

19. "O sinful wretch, this despicable act was perpetrated by you. Hence, stay on the ground in the form of a stone."

20. At that very instant his wife was transformed into a stone and Indra became bereft of his testicles.

21. The marks of a thousand vaginas became manifest on his face.

22. Thereat, he became too ashamed to go back to his city. He went into a cave on mountain Meru and remained there isolated.

23. Deprived of the presence and supervision of Indra, all the groups of Devas became distressed. They were not aware that he was in a cave and they engaged themselves in searching for him in hills and valleys.

24. As the Svarga became monarchless, the Devas were harassed by the hideous Dānavas.

25. In the meantime Jīva (Bṛhaspati) was asked by the grief-stricken and terrified Śakrāṇi: "Where has Purandara gone?"

26. Then Jīva meditated for a long time and saw him with his eye of knowledge. He went there along with Devas and spoke to him harshly:

27. "Why have you thus given up enjoyment of the kingdom and resorted to an isolated place? Have you adopted a life of meditation or resorted to severe penance?"

28. On hearing the words of Bṛhaspati, Purandara, with vagina-covered countenance, spoke shamefully:

He was distressed and drenched with tears.

29-31. "I will not rule over the three worlds at all. See the plight in which I have been placed by Sage Gautama.

How am I to face the Devas, Lord Śiva and Paulomī (Śacī) with this countenance marked with so many (a thousand) vaginas?

Due to the curse of Sage Gautama for a certain reason, O Bṛhaspati, all my worship in the mortal world has come to an end."

32. On hearing the words of the Lord of Devas, the lofty-minded Bṛhaspati was greatly distressed. Accompanied by all the Devas he approached Gautama and spoke to him himself:

33-34. "O Brāhmaṇa, forsaken by Indra, the entire range of the three worlds is being harassed by Dānavas. Yajñas, festivals and holy rites have come to an end.

Overwhelmed with shame, he (Indra) does not desire the kingdom. It behoves you to bless him duly. At my instance, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, withdraw his curse."

35. On hearing it Gautama said: "My statement cannot be false. I will not nullify what I have pronounced myself."

36. Then all of them, Viṣṇu, Maheśvara and all the groups of Devas stood by politely and spoke these words:

37. "O leading Brāhmaṇa, it is not fair on your part to falsify Brahmā's words; so change the curse of Hari (Indra) into one of blessing."

38. On seeing the mental firmness of the sage, the Suras with Viṣṇu as their leader, approached Brahmā and told him everything.

39-40. They told him how Śakra was cursed by the great sage and how despicable the mortification and chagrin of the Lord of Devas had become. They told him further how all the three worlds were being harassed by Dānavas.

41-46. They explained to him how the bashful Consort of Śacī was reluctant to rule due to a sense of shame.

On hearing their words, the Lotus-born Lord, in the company of Hari and Śāmbhu went to that place where the grief-stricken Slayer of Pāka was present.

Pitāmaha summoned Gautama too there and spoke to him directly in the presence of the Devas and Vāsava:

“O excellent sage, an improper act has been committed by the Lord of Devas in as much as he defiled your wife with his mind overwhelmed by lust.

It is not your fault that Purandara was cursed for this offence. But the forbearance of sages is always esteemed as very great. So be pleased and behave in such a way that Śatakratu resumes his rule of the three worlds.

Give him back his testicles; wipe off all these vaginas. See that his movement in the mortal world is also resumed.”

47. On hearing their words, the sage felt the necessity of honouring the prestige of Devas. He fitted testicles of a ram into Indra.

48. The excellent sage stroked those vaginas with his hand and transformed them into eyes. Thereafter, Gautama the sage of great power of penance, spoke to the Devas:

49-50. “O excellent Suras, Śakra has been transformed into one with a thousand eyes. Fitted with the testicles of a ram, he will rule over his kingdom. The splendour on his countenance arising from the eyes will be very pleasing.

He will possess manliness through the testicles of ram. But he will not have free access to the human world for the sake of worship.”

51. In the meantime, the thousand-eyed Purandara attained very great splendour and refulgence, thanks to the power of that Sage.

52. Then in the open congregation of all the Devas, Śakra grasped the feet of the noble-souled Gautama and spoke these words:

53-54. “O excellent Brāhmaṇa, worship in the human world is rare and very difficult to get. Do manage it in such a manner as I can get that with your favour.

O Brāhmaṇa, let not my designation ‘The Lord of the three worlds’ be annulled. Be gracious and do something so that the designation remains intact.”

55. On hearing these words, the excellent sage was overwhelmed with pity. He felt somewhat bashful too. In the presence of all the Devas he spoke to Pākāśāsana (Indra) directly:

56-59. "In the mortal world, you will be worshipped on five nights. You will derive unparalleled satisfaction thereby as though the duration was a full year.

People will be free from all ailments for a full year in that village, city or country, where the great festival (of Indra) is celebrated for five nights.

Neither mental worries nor physical ailments will torment them. There will be no famine at all. The king will never meet with destruction or loss. Nowhere shall there be misery.

O Purandara, the cows will yield plenty of milk. There shall be prosperity and all the people will be rid of all types of harassment, O Purandara, in that place where your festival is celebrated."

Indra said:

60-62. If it is so, let the grand festival take place in autumn. That season is charming unto all living beings with fresh foliage and growth of plants. It shall be resplendent with Saptacchada and Bandhūka in full bloom. The sweet scent of Mālātī flower will be wafted all round. Moonlight will be illuminating the entire area echoing with the humming of bees. Blue lotuses and water lilies will be in plenty. Manage everything so that even children and old men feel delighted.

Gautama said:

63. To-day the great festival is offered to you. The constellation is Śravaṇa. It is a meritorious constellation presided over by Viṣṇu. It is free from all sins.

64. O Purandara, you ravished my wife on the day when the constellation was Revatī with Pūṣan as its presiding deity. Certainly your downfall will become manifest in that.

65. The idea is, let my reputation proclaim your misdeed. Let it be known all over the world. Let no one commit sins.

66. The five constellations beginning with Śravaṇa will severally become, for the sake of your worship, like five *Kratu*s

(sacrifices). There is no doubt in this that they will become pervaded by (influenced by) all the Tirthas.

67. If anyone worships you with some desire in mind and offers fruits and flowers specifically, he shall obtain the entire benefit.

68. But nowhere shall your image (idol) be worthy of being adored. My wife, dearly loved and honoured like my very vital breath, a Brāhmaṇa lady, has been ravished and defiled by you.

69. Hence Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vedas will fix, with force, a stick cut off from a tree while chanting all of your Mantras.

70. They will worship you in accordance with the injunctions in the *Pañcarātra* (Texts) as in the case of other Heaven-dwellers. Thus human worship should be accepted by you after making it pass over to you. O Thousand-eyed One, you will be satisfied thereby.

71. As and when, a person causes the rise of your sleeping stick [the ritualistic dismissal intended] he will have more and more benefit and perfection, O Vāsava.

72-73. A person adopting the vow of celibacy should perform the *Pañcarātravrata* and perform the adoration with fruits and flowers as mentioned before. He shall be entirely rid of the sin resulting from the attachment for another man's wife.

74-75. The *Arghya* should be performed with the following Mantra: "Obeisance to Śakra; obeisance to you, Śunāsira the Lord; obeisance to you with the thunderbolt in your hand. Obeisance to you, armed with Vajra." If the devotee offers *Arghya* thus, all the sins arising from attachment to other man's wife will disappear.

76-77. O Purandara, if a person listens to or recites with excellent devotion this dialogue between you and me he will never fall ill for a year.

On hearing this, all the Devas said, "So be it" and were delighted.

78. They took Śakra with them to Amarāvati. Gautama who was still angry went back to his abode.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHT

Greatness of Gautameśvara,
Ahalyeśvara and Śatānandeśvara

Viśvāmitra said:

1-2. When Śakra and all the Devas went away to heaven, Gautama returned to his hermitage blazing with great fury. He narrated everything to Śatānanda¹ about the activities of the Devas and the boon granted to Śakra.

3-5. On hearing it, Śatānanda stood humbly and asked his father: "O my father, why don't you do some favour to my mother? O holy Lord, it is not at all impossible for you to make her rise up. Do me this favour so that I will get back my mother. O excellent sage, I am greatly distressed and am very anxious. Raise her up quickly and ordain the expiatory rite unto me, so that purity can be regained."

Gautama said:

6. The purity of women whose impurity is caused by the sprinkling (injection) of the semen of another person) will take place (i.e. is possible) if the purity of a utensil smeared (internally with liquor is possible).

7. After drinking liquor, a Brāhmaṇa can regain purity by means of Mauñji Homa, but not a woman who has been violated even after adopting *Tīṅginī Vrata*. (i.e. self-immolation in a fire pit filled with cowdung).

8. Even a liquor pot gets usually purified if duly baked in fire. Similarly, a woman in whose belly (womb) other man's semen has penetrated gets burned in fire (and regains purity).

9. It is for this reason, O my son, that your mother had been transformed into stone by me. Her purity is impossible to be accomplished by any (other) means.

Śatānanda said:

10. If that be the case, I shall for her sake go through fire or shall swallow poison or shall fall into deep waters.

1. Śatānanda, Gautama's son, was the chief royal priest of Janaka.

11. I may do so, O father, urged by the suffering caused by the separation from my mother. It is the truth that has been uttered by me. There are other righteous men (laying down rules of piety) e.g. the sages beginning with Manu.

12. Ponder over the various Itihāsas, Purāṇas and all the Vedānta works and prescribe the means of purity for me for the sake of my mother. I shall do so. Otherwise, I shall cease to live.

Viśvāmitra said:

13. On hearing it, Gautama pondered for a long time. He then embraced his son with both the arms and sniffed at his head. Thereafter, he said to his son:

14-18. "If it is so, dear son, do not commit any rash act in regard to (i.e. to get rid of) this sin, such as slaying yourself. Let my words be listened to: Even earlier I had known the means of purity of your mother whereby she will become worthy of my abode undoubtedly. Janārdana will be born in the solar race in the form of Rāma, in the guise of a human being, for the purpose of slaying Rāvana. She will regain purity by the contact of his foot. Wait for it, dear son. Do not be over-eager.

Dear boy, this has been known perfectly by me through (my) divine vision."

19. On hearing this Śatānanda became highly delighted. After saying "So be it", the boy, fond of his mother, waited patiently for that (auspicious) hour.

20. Thereafter, in due course, after a long time Janārdana in the form of Rāma was born in the abode of Daśaratha for the purpose of killing Rāvaṇa.

21. That Lord Viṣṇu, yet in his childhood, was brought by me to my hermitage for the protection of my own Yajñas by destroying the Rākṣasas who were bent upon destroying the sacrificial rites.

22-23. After the terrible Rākṣasas had been killed, my Makha was duly concluded. The scion of the family of Raghus was brought by me from Ayodhyā along with Lakṣmaṇa for the marriage of Sītā about whose Svayaṁvara and the assemblage of kings I had duly heard.

24. Then on the way, in the splendid hermitage of Gautama, Ahalyā was seen by me in the form of a huge stone image.

25. Then Rāma was told by me: "Dear boy, touch her with your hand so that she may regain the human form. She is the beloved wife Sage Gautama. It was on account of the curse of the excellent sage that she was transformed into a stone image."

26. O excellent king, at my behest and urged by curiosity, Rāma touched that rock unhesitatingly.

27. Then, on being touched by Rāma, the wife of the sage became transformed into a human being. She shone with divine form and features.

28. Recollecting her affair with Śakra, she became ashamed. She then bowed down to Gautama (and said):

29-30. "O my Lord, prescribe unto me an expiatory rite fully as laid down by Prajāpati in connection with the close intimacy of one with another (other than legally wedded spouse). Even if it is difficult, I shall undoubtedly carry it out, so that I can regain purity through the Puraścaraṇa rite."

31-32. After thinking about it for a long time Gautama said: "Perform a hundred Cāndrāyaṇa expiations, a thousand Kṛcchra rites and ten thousand Prājāpatya rites. Observe the vow of pilgrimage to the sixty-eight holy places where all the Tirthas on the earth are present. By visiting them all perfectly, you will regain purity."

33-34. She consented saying "So be it." She observed the relevant vows and wandered over the sixty-eight excellent Tirthas beginning with Vārāṇasī in due order. She devoutly worshipped all the Liṅgas. In due course she reached the holy place of Hāṭakeśvara.

35-36. As the chaste lady looked ahead, there was a great serpent hole. It was the path unto Pātāla whereby the great sages engrossed in pilgrimage used to go for the vision of Lord Hāṭakeśvara. It had been closed by Nāgaraṣ themselves.

37-38. Then she began to think, 'If the Lord of Suras, Hāṭakeśvara, is not visited one cannot attain the benefit of the pilgrimage. Hence I shall remain steady and perform a very difficult penance through the power whereof I can visualise the Lord of Suras.'

39. After coming to such a decision, she performed a very

severe penance for getting the vision of the Lord whose abode is in Pātāla.

40. In summer she performed the penance in the midst of five fires; in Hemanta (early winter) she resorted to the waters; in rainy season she lay under the open sky.

41. After installing a Liṅga of Hara after her own name, she performed its worship by its side thrice a day with sweet scents, flowers, and unguents.

42. A long period of time elapsed even as she continued her penance in this manner but she could not get even a glimpse of Lord Hāṭakeśvara.

43. Once her son Śātānanda who was extremely fond of his mother and was trying to find her came to this holy place.

44. He saw her engaged in the severe penance. Bowing down to her in great distress, he spoke these words to her in sorrow:

45-48. "Why do you subject your body to great strain by performing this severe penance? All the Liṅgas pertaining to Maheśvara in sixty-seven Tīrthas have been visited by you. No man has ever seen this Liṅga situated in Pātāla and designated Hāṭakeśvara.

In view of what you have already done, the purity has been attained as indicated by your husband. Hence, do come. We shall go to our auspicious hermitage. Father is eagerly awaiting you like a farmer awaiting the advent of rainy season."

Ahalyā said:

49-50. I will not return home unless and until I have viewed the Lord designated as Hāṭakeśvara. Dear son, I will go home when I see Hara. This determination has been made by me.

51. On hearing it he said, "If this is your resolve (nay determination) then I will go near father only along with you."

52. After saying thus, he too installed the Liṅga of Śaṁbhu and worshipped it thrice a day and engaged himself in the penance.

53. O saintly king, Śātānanda propitiated the Liṅga with various kinds of food offerings, sweet scents, flowers and unguents and Vedic hymns.

54. Even as the sage was engaged in the Vratas and rites, taking in food only once in six meal-times a long period of time elapsed. Yet the Lord of Devas did not become pleased with both of them.

55. In his eagerness to see his son, the great sage Gautama too came there himself then after a long time.

56. On seeing him along with his wife engaged in the penance, Gautama became pleased at the outset but later he became grieved.

57. 'Alas, it is a great pity! My son has become very lean as a result of the penance. How can I take him back to my abode? Similarly my wife too has become pallid and very lean!'

58. After thinking thus in his mind he spoke to them both: "Desist from the performance of the penance and come home."

Śatānanda said:

59. Dear father, mother has already been told many times to stop the performance of penance. She will not go home if Lord Hātakaśvara is not seen.

60. It is also certain that I will not go without her. Know this, O highly esteemed one, and do what is proper.

Gautama said:

61. O dear son, if (your) mother's determination is such I shall show Hātakaśvara by means of my penance.

62. After saying so the great sage too performed a penance. For a hundred years the sage undertook fast on alternate days. Then, for the same period he took food only once in six meal times.

63. Afterwards he took food only once in three days. Then the leading sage spent a similar period taking only fruits. A further similar period he spent taking in only water. Then the sage took in only air for a similar period.

64. Then at the end of more than a thousand years, an excellent Liṅga came out piercing through the surface of the earth.

65. It resembled the splendour of twelve suns. It had all

the characteristic features. In the meantime Lord Sāmbhu became visible.

66. At the same time the Moon-crested Lord came within the range of his vision and spoke these words:

67-71. "O Gautama, O sage of excellent holy rites, I am pleased with this penance of yours.

This Liṅga of mine is designated as Hāṭakeśvara. O great sage; due to your devoutness this has come out from Pātāla.

Is it not for this purpose that the penance was performed by you along with your wife and son? The entire benefit thereof has taken effect as desired.

Let your wife Ahalyā of divine form and features view this, whereby she will attain the benefit of the pilgrimage to the sixty-eight holy places.

You too request for a boon which I shall grant entirely."

Gautama said:

72. Let the merit accrued to men by visiting once Hāṭakeśvara in Pātāla be derived (by men) by viewing and especially by worshipping this Liṅga.

73. Other people too who worship it devoutly on the fourteenth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Caitra, will go to heaven.

74. Ordinary men do not know this Liṅga. Hence desirous of perfection and Siddhi, they enter a cavity of the earth with a desire for viewing Hāṭakeśvara.

75-76. By the power of this Liṅga, even sinners are freed from the sin arising from contact with other men's wives. Men become free from sins by viewing, Ahalyeśvara as well as Śatānandeśvara. They will become sinless through the worship of both performed on that day.

Viśvāmitra said:

77. In the meantime, O king, the entire Svarga was filled with men full of sins and devoid of all virtues.

78. No one performs Yajña, pilgrimage, Vrata or other observances. They do not make any gift whatsoever.

79. Viewing those three Liṅgas, touching them and worshipping them devoutly (they used to go to heaven).

80. Surrounded by men urged by great rivalry all the Suras became frightened. With great pain and anguish they went to Purandara and said:

81-87. "O Thousand-eyed One, all righteous acts have stopped in the mortal world. Even men of sinful conduct come here arrogantly and vie with us always. In the holy place of Hātakeśvara there are three excellent Liṅgas. They have been installed by the noble-souled Gautama in the company of his wife and son. By the power of their worship, all men of sinful conduct come here. All the Narakas of Yama have become vacant.

Hātakeśvara has been brought from Pātāla by Gautama after propitiating the Lord by means of his penance. It is by the power of the Lord that all these things have occurred on the earth. After knowing these, manage everything so that Yajñas will be performed. Without them, we can never become satisfied."

88. On hearing those words Vāsava summoned *Manmatha*, *Krodha* (Anger), *Lobha* (Greed), *Dambha* (Arrogance, Hypocrisy), *Matsara* (Jealousy) and *Dveṣa* (Hatred).

89-90. "Go to the earth quickly at my behest. With your power restrain the worshippers of Gautameśvara, Ahalyeśvara and Śātānandeśvara."

On getting the command of Śakra, They went to the earth.

91. Kāma and others overwhelmed the worshippers of Gautameśvara, Ahalyeśvara and Śātānandeśvara.

92. Thereupon, Yajñas began to be performed again all over the earth with the full complement of Dakṣiṇās (monetary gifts). So also Vratas and observances of holy rites.

93. Pilgrimages were undertaken. Japa, Homa and other holy rites also functioned properly. O king, I have thus narrated everything I was asked.

94-95. In the context of extolling Gayākūpī I narrated the acts of Śakreśvara, the establishment of Indra in the mortal world, the story of Ahalyā and the greatness of Gautameśvara and Ahalyeśvara.

96. He who is endowed with great faith and listens to this shall instantly be rid of the sin arising from contact with other men's wives.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINE

Origin of Śaṅkhāditya and Śaṅkhatīrtha

Ānarta said:

1-3. Now, O tiger among sages, tell me fully the greatness of Śaṅkhatīrtha. I have great faith therein.

Wonderful indeed is the Tirtha! Wonderful indeed is the Tirtha called Hāṭakeśvara! It is the only holy place which is the most splendid and full of miracles. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I am not fully satiated by listening to the excellent greatness of this holy place.

Viśvāmitra said:

4. In this context, I shall narrate unto you the account of an earlier incident, of how the greatness of Śaṅkhatīrtha came to be established over the earth.

5. Formerly, there was another king who ruled over Ānarta in the same manner as you who rule over all the peoples on the earth now.

6. All of a sudden, he became a leper and disabled in limbs. He had no sons. Overpowered by enemies the excellent king became frightened.

7. He was harassed all round by all the kings. Ousted from his kingdom, he came to Raivataka mountain.

8. There too he was disturbed by robbers all round.

9-10. When he was deprived of his treasures and elephants, horses and chariots, he began to think, 'What shall I do now? All my wives are being carried off by robbers forcibly.'

11. After thinking thus, O tiger among kings, he went to the holy Lord Nārada to meet him on the Vaiṣṇava day (eleventh lunar day, or the day with Śravaṇa constellation).

12. There he saw the excellent Sage Nārada. He had come there in the course of his pilgrimage with a desire to visit Dāmodara.

13. He lowered his head and bowed down with palms joined in reverence. In his dejected mood, he sat in front of him and spoke these words:

The king said:

14. O excellent sage, I am assailed from all sides by my enemies. Then having been ousted from the kingdom, I have come to this great mountain.

15-16. In the forest I am harassed by sinful robbers all round. A few horses, elephants etc. that had accompanied me were entirely taken away by them. The treasury, the ladies and much of the cash on hand were also looted by them. Hence, O excellent sage, I am utterly disgusted. Do tell me now:

17. Is this the result of a terrible sin of mine committed in some previous birth, O excellent sage, which has put me in this miserable plight?

18. On hearing his words, the leading sage meditated for a long time. He understood everything through his divine vision and spoke thus to the distressed king:

Nārada said:

19. O great king, nothing despicable had been committed by you in the previous life. Everything has been understood by me through divine vision.

20. Formerly, you were a king of the lunar race in the city named Siddhapannaga. You eliminated all enemies.

21. You performed great Yajñas always with full complement of monetary gifts. Other great gifts were also made and excellent Brāhmaṇas were honoured.

22. As a result of those good acts, you have become a king once again.

Ānarta said:

23. Even in this birth, O holy Lord, I do not remember having committed anything wrong. Then why was I ousted from the kingdom all of a sudden?

24. In this world, O tiger among sages, the life of a person devoid of Lakṣmī (good fortune, affluence) shall become futile. This I have understood now.

25. A man bereft of fortune and glory is as good as dead. A kingdom without a ruler is as good as no kingdom. Religious gift offered to one who is not learned in the Vedas is as good as no gift. A Yajña without monetary gifts is as good as no Yajña.

26. Even kinsmen become estranged from a man devoid of fortune and wealth. On seeing him they think, 'He will request us for something surely' and they go elsewhere (to avoid him).

27. This is just like my case now. Even those who were helped and propitiated by me, go far off on seeing me thinking, 'Oh, this fellow, will request us for something!'.

28. Like birds that leave a dry tree (on which they lived), kinsmen desert a man without money, though he may be excellent and of noble birth.

29. If a poor man approaches the house of rich people even for doing their own task, they certainly rebuke him and do not go near him.

30. If a rich man, though miserly, actually comes to request for something, people rather think 'He will give me something.'

31. "You are one belonging to my ancestral family and your father to my fathers. He was always affectionate but you are devoid of affection."

32-33. In this world people of noble birth are seen standing before sinful yet rich people. They say this (as if) with a desire to get money. A person who rules over the earth is reduced to poverty. It results only in great distress of the heart. These two are sharp thorns causing distress to the body, viz. a poor man who aspires to love and a man though devoid of power becoming angry.

34. Men greedy of wealth resort to even the cremation ground at nightfall. They go to far-off lands forever forsaking their own progenitors.

35. If one has wealth in one's mansion one is sure to be considered as a learned man, although one is really utterly foolish and a man though of ignoble birth as of noble birth. In the contrary case everything becomes the very opposite.

36. O excellent sage, I am disgusted with my life now. So do tell me, why poverty has befallen me.

37. Leprosy also has come to me over and above the torment from the enemies. The other births are (can be) seen by you through your divine vision.

38. And you say that those births have not been defiled even by the least of misdeeds. O excellent sage, I remember the facts of this visible life of mine.

39. (In this life) no evil act has ever been perpetrated by me. Then, O excellent sage, why has this ousting from the kingdom taken place in my case?

40. I am eager and inquisitive in this connection. Give me a decisive answer whether auspicious or inauspicious acts do find their results operative.

Viśvāmitra said:

41. On hearing his words, Nārada meditated for a long time. He was overwhelmed with pity and he spoke respectfully:

42. "Listen, O king, I shall tell you how purity can be regained and how you will get back the realm once again.

43. In your land (Ānarta), there is a holy spot highly meritorious and well-known in all the three worlds by the name Hāṭakeśvara. There is a splendid Tīrtha there famous by the name Śaṅkhatīrtha. It is destructive of all sins.

44-45. A person should be possessed of great faith. He should take his holy bath there at sunrise on the eighth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Mādhava (Vaiśākha) coinciding with a Sunday. He becomes freed from all types of leprosy and (becomes) brilliant on a par with the Sun.

46. Whatever desire he may cherish, he will undoubtedly get it by visiting the auspicious deity Śaṅkheśvara even if that desired thing is rare in all the worlds.

47. O king, You stayed in this land. Still, haven't you heard the greatness of that Tīrtha? Wherefor have you come here (at all)?"

Siddhasena (The king) said:

48. What is the origin of the deity Śaṅkheśvara? Do narrate, O excellent sage.

Nārada said:

49. O king, I shall tell you this age-old legend as to how the deity Śaṅkheśvara and Śaṅkha Tīrtha originated.

50. Formerly, there were two Brāhmaṇas named Śaṅkha and Likhita.¹ They were two brothers well-versed in the Vedas

1. Śaṅkha and Likhita are writers of Smṛtis. Their legend in Mbh, *Śānti*. 23.20-27 is modified here to glorify Śaṅkha Tīrtha (Mbh, gives the credit of recovery of Śaṅkha's arms to river Bāhudā. Here Śaṅkha Tīrtha gets the credit).

and engaged in severe penance.

51. Once, O king, Śaṅkha went to the hermitage of his elder brother Likhita for paying respects.

52. He found the hermitage vacant as Likhita was absent.

53. He saw ripe fruits in that park. O king, he thought, 'After all this is my brother's hermitage' and lovingly took (some) of the ripe fruits.

54. In the meantime, Likhita came back to the hermitage and saw Śaṅkha with the big fruits plucked.

55-56. "O sinner, why is this evil deed despised by good people, committed by you? The despicable act of theft has been committed by you as the fruits have been plucked (by you). As a result of this deed, your power of penance will get dwindled; you have engaged yourself in the act of stealth; you are (thereby) despised by Brāhmaṇas."

Śaṅkha said:

57. Elder brother born of the same womb is like one's father, according to a very famous Vedic passage well-known everywhere.

58. Therefore, O great Brāhmaṇa, has the son no right in his father's wealth? O holy Sir, why do you rebuke me with very harsh words?

Likhita said:

59-60. It is my opinion that there is no harm if the son still remains in the family of his father and makes use of his father's assets unhesitatingly. But, if the son or brother becomes separate after a division of the property and makes use of the father's property, he incurs the sin of theft.

61. A father can, of course, take the wealth or property from his son always. He incurs no sin or blame even if the son has become separate after the division of property.

62. In this context a verse has been composed by Manu, the author of the Smṛti. I shall quote those words of ethical code:

63. "One's wife, servant and son—these three are said to be persons without assets. Whatever they get or inherit is the wealth of the person to whom they belong."

Śaṅkha said:

64. If it is so, O dear one, I have incurred greater sin. Chastise me quickly, lest there should be loss of penance.

Viśvāmitra said:

65. On coming to know of his decision, the ruthless (elder) brother took up a clean weapon and cut off his (Śaṅkha's) arms. The Brāhmaṇa whose hands had been cut, suffered much pain.¹

66. O king, he considered this as a favour indeed of his elder brother.

67. He considered the holy place called Hātakeśvara as one that yields cherished desires. Having come there he resorted to a water tank and performed penance.

68. During rainy season he lay under the open sky; during winter he resorted to water reservoirs; in summer he performed the penance in the midst of five fires. He took food only once in the course of six meal times.

69. He bathed (the images of) Bhāskara and Sthāṇu. Before them he recited *Śatarudriya*, the Rudra verses from Sāmaveda, *Bhavarudra* verses. *Prāṇarudras* and *Nīlarudras* along with Skanda Sūktas.

70. Then at the end of a thousand years, Maheśvara became pleased with him. He appeared before him in the company of the Sun-god and Indra.

Maheśvara said:

71. O my dear Śaṅkha of good holy rites, I am pleased with your penance. Tell me quickly what I shall offer you now.

Śaṅkha said:

72. O Lord, if you are pleased, if a boon has to be granted to me, let both of my arms grow up again and be similar to the former ones.

73. O Lord of the excellent Suras, take great pity on me and reside in this Liṅga permanently.

1. According to Mbh, *śanti* 23. 18-36, King Sudyumna inflicted the punishment on Likhita's complaint.

74. O Lord, let this water reservoir become famous all over the earth after my own name as long as the Moon, the Sun and the stars shine.

75. A person may think of the rarest of things and take his bath here (in this tank). Let him attain that entirely, O Lord.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

76-77. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I appeared before you this day i.e. the eighth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Mādhava. Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I shall pass into your Liṅga on this day and remain there for a day undoubtedly.

78-79. He who takes his holy bath in this Tīrtha on a Sunday at sunrise and worships my image installed by you shall be rid of the disease of leprosy. He will go to my world.

80. Even on other occasions, O leading Brāhmaṇa, (if any one bathes therein) he gets rid of sins unwittingly committed. There is no doubt. This is my promise, O excellent Brāhmaṇa.

81. So also your hands that have been cut off shall crop up once again in the same manner as a result of the holy ablution.

82. This is my conviction. O Brāhmaṇa, you will also become convinced now. Take the holy bath again and adore my image.

83. Other persons too with crippled limbs should take their holy bath during this astral combination here. If after bath they adore me they will attain salvation.

84. After saying thus, the Thousand-rayed Lord vanished. Śaṅkha immediately took bath and worshipped Divākara (Sun-god).

85. When he surveyed himself, he saw himself endowed with the hands. He was surprised.

86. Ever since then, O king, he set up his penance grove. The excellent Brāhmaṇa performed penance and attained the greatest goal.

87. Hence, O leading king, at such an astral-combination, take your holy bath in accordance with the injunctions and worship Divākara.

88. If any one listens to this narration or reads it before (an image of) Ravi there shall be no leper at all in his family.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TEN

Importance of Tāmbūla

Viśvāmitra said:

1-6. On hearing the words of the celestial sage Nārada, king Siddhasena, awaited the excellent astral combination. On the eighth lunar day in the month of Mādhava (Vaiśākha) coinciding with a Sunday, he took his holy bath at sunrise and worshipped Ravi.

Immediately, he became rid of his leprosy. He attained a divine physical form and became highly pleased.

He then performed the expiatory rite for having chewed the broken betel leaves, unwittingly. Thereupon, the king regained the greatest splendour and glory. He then ruled over the ancestral kingdom as before.

Thus, O excellent king, the greatness of Śaṅkhatīrtha has been wholly narrated to you. What else do you wish to hear further?

Ānarta said:

7. O holy Sir, your statement that he (the king) lost his royal glory by chewing the broken betel leaves is extremely surprising.

8. Of what nature is the expiatory rite performed by him for gaining purity? How was his own kingdom ruled by him as before?

Viśvāmitra said:

9. O king, this Nāgavallī (betel leaf and its creeper) is sacred and pure. If it is placed within the mouth (i.e. chewed) in an improper manner it will result in many disasters and adverse effects. Hence, the leaf should be scrupulously eaten (chewed) after giving it (offering it) in accordance with one's own capacity.

Ānarta said:

10. How did the Nāgavallī originate? How is it said that

by chewing improperly there will be great defect? It behoves you to tell me.

Viśvāmitra said:

11. The importance of the questions asked by you is great. Still, O king, if you have any curiosity, I shall explain to you how evil results from chewing the broken leaves.

12. Formerly, the Milk Ocean was churned by Devas after making the Mandara mountain the churning rod and Vāsuki the cord.

13. At the suggestion of Vāsudeva, Bali engaged himself at the facial region (of the serpent) and all the Suras in the region of the tail. The Kacchapa (Tortoise incarnation of Viṣṇu) held up (the mountain).

14. O excellent king Ānarta, when Mandara was being whirled three Ratnas (jewels) came out at the outset.

15. The first one was a frightening person of crooked nose. He wore a dark-blue cloth. He was swarthy and black-toothed. His head was big, neck long and belly bulging out. His feet resembled a winnowing basket. The eyes were flattened.

16. His wife had the same hideous form like that of a Rākṣasī. An infant had caught hold of her fingers. She was experiencing great fatigue due to pregnancy.

17. Thereupon, all the groups of Devas and Dānavas in particular left the churning rod and ran after them to seize them.

18. Seeing them hideous and horrible all of them hesitated, O leading king. They could not seize them. They looked at one another and laughed.

19-20. Then Daitya Bali stood with palms joined in reverence and spoke: "Brahmā is the first i.e. chief one, as usual. It is he who should get what comes out at the outset. Hence, let the Lotus-born take these three jewels. Thereby, we shall have Siddhi in this activity of churning because it (Trinity of Ratnas) is dedicated to *Ka* (Brahmā)."

21. That statement of his was approved by Viṣṇu, Śaṅkara, Indra and other Suras and especially by all the Dānavas in particular.

22. In the meantime, Brahmā accepted the three things out of courtesy and consideration for the Devas, O king, though he did not relish it. They persevered more and churned the ocean again, O king.

23. Then Vāruṇī (Liquor) came out effervescent with divine odour. Even as Indra watched, it was taken up by Bali.

24. After one more round of churning the Kaustubha jewel came out. O great king it was taken by Viṣṇu, the powerful one.

25. In the next round, the Lord of the Night (the Moon) came out. It was instantly taken up by the Lord having the bull as his emblem (Śiva).

26. Pārijāta with divine scent came up then. All the Suras took it up and planted it in the Nandana garden.

27. Thereafter, Surabhi (Divine cow) (Kāmadhenu) along with her calf came up and proceeded to Goloka by the heavenly path.

28-29. Then Dhanvantari came out holding the Kamaṇḍalu (Pot) filled with Amṛta (Nectar) in his hand. It was grasped simultaneously by both the Devas and the Dānavas who were furious and desired to conquer one another.

The *Vaidya* (physician Dhanvantari) came within the grasp of the Devas and the Kamaṇḍalu that of the Daityas.

30. Then, O king, those greedy ones churned the ocean. Thereupon, Lakṣmī clad in white garments, came out holding a lotus in her hand.

31-32. O excellent king, Viṣṇu was wooed by her herself. Then the ocean was churned further with more ardour by the Devas and the Dānavas. Then Kālakūṭa poison came up whereby both the Suras and the Asuras experienced great suffering. They scattered themselves in all the ten quarters.

33. On seeing it, O leading king, Lord Śambhu of great valour quickly swallowed and became Nilakaṇṭha (one with a blue throat).

34. Then the Daityas and the Suras left the churning activity, Mandara and Vāsuki. For the sake of Amṛta, the Devas fought a fierce battle with the Daityas.

35-39. Then Viṣṇu assumed the guise of a woman and said to them such words as made Bali convinced and he handed over the Piyūṣa (Nectar) to her. In great confidence, he fought with the Suras.

Viṣṇu left the female form and resumed the manly form. He then took the Amṛta to the place where the Heaven-dwellers were present. With great delight he said: "O Suras, drink the nectar. Thereby, you will gain immortality and slay the Dānavas. Affirming "It shall be so" they drank the excellent Piyūṣa. Becoming immortal they slew the great Asuras in battle.

40. Even as their drinking bout went on, O king, Rāhu drank Piyūṣa in the guise of a Deva.

41. At that very instant the great Daitya was noticed by Moon and Sun. O king they reported: "O Hari, this is a great Asura, not a Deva."

42. On hearing it, O excellent king, the discus Sudarśana having adamant lustre, was discharged in order to kill him.

43. Since, O king, only the body had been pervaded by the Amṛta, his head was cut off though the Amṛta was never futile.

44. Thereupon, the son of Simhikā (Rāhu) gained immortality and so Acyuta told him in excessively sweet conciliatory terms:

45. "O highly esteemed one, leave the Daityas and be honoured by the Devas. You will always be adored in the group of Planets."

46. Saying "So be it", he abandoned the excellent Daityas. Stationed in the midst of the Planets, he receives the adoration of human beings.

47. In the meantime, the Daityas were defeated by the excellent Suras. Utterly frightened, they fled to different quarters. Some of them died too.

48. The Piyūṣa that remained after they had drunk it, was placed in the Nandāna garden where the king of elephants (i.e. Airāvata, the elephant of Indra) had been tethered to his post.

49. The leading elephant shed its ichor day and night. Due to its power, the pot of Piyūṣa got split.

50. Then a creeper grew up from the pot. It twined round the tethering post (of Airāvata) and had a luscious growth.

51. The excellent Suras found the leaves thereof extremely fragrant and hitherto unknown. Hence they plucked them and ate them.

52. O king, they found them especially useful in purifying the mouth and they were delighted.

53. O king, Dhanvantari, the physician, came to know of it. Since the creeper grew out from the tethering post of an elephant (Nāga), it will be called Nāgavallī (a creeper from an elephant's post) or 'betel'.

54. It will be the place or abode of Smara (god of Love). Then he named it Nāgavallī.

55. He stipulated its combination with arecanut, lime powder and Khadira (catechu). The combination shall be Tāmbūla.

56. Once upon a time, King Vāṇivatsaraka propitiated Śakra by means of his pure penance.

57. Then Indra who was pleased with his penance spoke these words:

Indra said:

58. O king, I am pleased with this penance now. Tell me what boon I shall give, the boon you have been always cherishing.

59. He replied: "If you are pleased with me, if a boon has to be granted to me, give me an aerial chariot that can go through the firmament. Thereby, I can come to your abode from the surface of the earth everyday, dear Lord, in order to offer obeisance to you."

60. He consented saying "So be it" and gave him a Vimāna (aerial chariot). It produced the sounds of swan and peacock and had the velocity of mind and wind.

61. Imbued with great devotion, he rode in it everyday and went to the abode of Devas in order to pay respect to the Thousand-eyed One.

62. Śakra gave him the Tāmbūla (betel leaves together with the other items for chewing) with his own hand and he chewed it with highly delighted mind.

63. Thanks to the power of the Tāmbūla, O king, his lust increased despite his old age.

64-65. Then, endowed with excessive humility, the king said this to Śakra; "May I be favoured with the offer of Nāgavallī. I intend to take it to the mortal world, so that it can be propagated."

He consented saying "So be it" and gave that (leaf) to him.

66. He went to his home town and planted it in his own garden. Then, in the course of a long time it became popular all over the earth.

67. By tasting it all the people became sex-minded. No one performed Yajña himself nor on behalf of another. All other religious rites and holy activities came to a standstill.

68. Thereupon, all the groups of Devas were deprived of their share in the Yajñas. They became afflicted and therefore furious. They went to Pitāmaha and reported:

69. "In the mortal world, O most excellent one among Suras, all sacred rites have ceased because by chewing Tāmbūla, the people have become indulgent in love play. Hence do this favour unto us so that our rites can be revived."

70-72. In the meantime, O king, a poor man saw Pitāmaha who was stationed in Puṣkara, arriving for performing of Yajña. He bowed down to him humbly and said: "O most excellent one among Suras, I have become disgusted with this continuous stay in the abodes of Brāhmaṇas. Hence suggest to me an excellent abode of wealthy people. O Lord, I can attain satisfaction there in plenty."

73. On hearing his words, Pitāmaha pondered for a long time and spoke to the poor man about vulnerable points found in wealthy people:

74-76. "O poor man, you shall permanently stay in broken leaves at my instance. Your wife shall stay at the tip of the leaf. Your son shall stay around the stalks of the leaves. At night you always stay along with both of them in the Khadirasāra. These four spots are said to be the vulnerable points of the wealthy people and more so in the case of kings. At my instance do hurry up and go there."

Nārada said:

77. Thus, O king, everything that I have been asked has been narrated to you.

78. O king, you have unwittingly employed all these vulnerable points in the case of betel leaves. It was on account of that, that all your riches became ruined all of a sudden.

The king said:

79. O leading sage, tell me the expiatory rite for that also. It is probable that sometimes I might have chewed betel leaves in that manner.

80. By that expiatory rite purity can be regained (dispelling the adverse) effect of evil betel leaf.

Viśvāmitra said:

81. O king, listen, I shall explain to you the expiatory rite to be performed confidently for purifying the evil arising from eating a bad betel leaf.

82. With festival occasion in view (i.e. at that time), a person equipped with perfect faith should bring a Brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, O king.

83-84. His feet should be washed and he should be made to wear two cloths. After honouring him with sweet scents, flowers etc. he should get a betel leaf made of gold in accordance with his capacity. In the place of lime paste, a pearl should be used. A heap of lazuli stones shall represent the arecanut and a piece of silver catechu. The devotee then offers the same repeating the following Mantra:

85-86. "Since the stalk of a betel leaf, a broken leaf and other things have been chewed by me earlier and catechu at night too, I have incurred sin. By way of dispelling it and regaining purity again, let this Tāmbūla be accepted." Thereafter, the Brāhmaṇa should repeat this Mantra, O king:

87-88. "(I utter this Mantra) for the benefit of the householder (devotee) and for the purification of all sins. If the despised betel leaf is chewed knowingly or unknowingly, if he is likely to swallow anything (similar), let the defect thereof be warded off undoubtedly at my instance and thanks for propitiating me."

89. By offering the betel leaf (made of gold) etc. in this manner, one shall regain purity. O king, no man suffers from the defect of chewing an evil betel leaf.

90. Hence, O great king, perform this rite. Indeed this is highly meritorious and it increases great enjoyment of pleasures.

91. If a person, O leading king, makes this gift devoutly in this manner, he will never be defiled in any of his birth thereafter by the evil betel leaf.

92. A person who chews (such a) betel but does not make this gift, shall be deprived of Tāmbūla in all subsequent births.

93. If anyone's mouth is deprived of betel leaf, O king, it is the cavity of an impoverished miser and not a real mouth.

94. He who offers (expiatory Tāmbūla) at the outset i.e. a betel leaf to a leading Brāhmaṇas and then chews it himself, shall become handsome, fortunate and efficient in every birth.

95-96. Thus the adverse effect of chewing an evil betel leaf has been described to you entirely. O king, by the gift thereof (purity is regained). In the context of the description of Śaṅkhāditya the good and evil effects of chewing a betel leaf etc. and the benefit of its gift have been stated.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED ELEVEN

Greatness of Śaṅkha Tīrtha

Viśvāmitra said:

1. After describing the cause of (king's) poverty as well as of the defect of the fell disease of leprosy of the king, Nārada, the excellent sage, spoke again:

2-10. "It is after knowing it through divine vision thus, that the entire cause of leprosy as well as of poverty has been described to you.

Now I shall tell you how your discomfiture resulted from (the attack of your) enemies as a sequel to the insult done unto the Brāhmaṇas.

Any Lord of Ānarta who is to be crowned here as king, first goes devoutly to the village of Nāgaras. This was contemplated by you, O king, but due to inadvertence, it was not done. The Brāhmaṇas who requested (for it) repeatedly were turned back. Due to anger, the charter of benefits offered to the Brāhmaṇas from the days of their fathers and grandfathers was ignored by you.

Therefore, you are faced with failure and defeat at the hands of enemies. Having realized this, O king, grant those charters to the Brāhmaṇas by way of restoration. What was forfeited should be restored."

On hearing it, the king had his holy bath devoutly performed in Śaṅkha Tirtha. He summoned those Brāhmaṇas through a *Madhyaga*. In front of the deity. Śaṅkhāditya, the king washed their feet and gave the noble-souled Nāgaras one hundred twenty-six Śāsanas (charters of benefit or grants).

11. In the meantime, with the favour of the Brāhmaṇas, all the enemies who were present there met with their death.

Viśvāmitra said:

12. Thus, O excellent one among kings, everything concerned with the power of Śaṅkha Tirtha has been narrated to you. What more do you wish to hear?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWELVE

Greatness of Ratnāditya

The sages said:

1-2. O Sūtanandana, the meritorious trio of Tirtha in the holy place designated as Hāṭakeśvara that has been described by you, has been listened to.

We now wish to hear about the greatness of (the Tirtha of) Viśvāmitra which do explain to us. We have great eagerness.

Sūta said:

3. The other shore of the sea can be seen, the limit of the earth can be observed but that cannot be so, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, in the case of the good qualities of that sage that redeem (people).

4. Can the capacity of the intelligent son of Gādhi be estimated by anyone? O excellent Brāhmaṇas, though born a Kṣatriya, he attained the status of Brāhmaṇa.

5. By him were directly created Devas who took their shares from the Yajña of King Triśaṅku transformed into an *Antyaja* (low-born) formerly.

6. Competing with god Brahmā, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, even (a new) creation was attempted by him formerly but he was requested to desist from it by the Devas who bowed down to him.

7. Now I shall expound the greatness of the Tīrtha pertaining to him. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, it is destructive of all sins. May it be listened to.

8. Without using any implement (of digging) the ground all round was dug up with his own hands by that noble-souled sage and a holy pit was created there.

9. There he meditated and brought the river Jāhnavī from Pātāla. The pure translucent water thereof came to the mortal world.

10. The water is very tasty. It is destructive of all sins through holy ablution. Bhāskara, (Sun-god) the thief of waters (i.e. one who dries up water), was also installed by him there.

11. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, he who takes his holy bath there in that auspicious whirlpool on the seventh lunar day in the bright half of the month of Māgha coinciding with Sunday and bows down to Divākara (Sun-god) is rid of leprous ailments and sins.

12. To the north-western side thereof there is a water-tank created by Dhanvantari. It destroys all ailments.

13. The liberal-minded Dhanvantari performed a penance there formerly. Equipped with good power of a penance and meditating with concentration, he bowed down (to Lord Sun).

14. After a long time, Bhāskara was pleased with him and said to him: "I shall grant a boon, O highly intelligent one. Request for the same."

Dhanvantari said:

15. O Lord, O most excellent one among Suras! If any man takes his holy bath here in the Kuṇḍa with great devotion, let every ailment in him be dispelled.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

16-17. He who takes his holy bath there on this praise-worthy day, the seventh lunar day coinciding with a Sunday, early in the morning at sunrise, with great concentration, shall

at that very instant be free from ailments even though (he be) afflicted with great diseases. One without ailment will obtain all desires and one without desires will attain salvation (Mokṣa).

18. After saying thus Ravi, the most excellent one among Suras, vanished. Dhanvantari too went back to his abode well pleased within himself.

19. Once upon a time, there was a king named Ratnākṣa hailing from the Solar race. He was the well-known Lord of Ayodhyā.

20. He possessed the qualities of gratitude and munificence. He was always faithful to his wife. He was resplendent and heroic. He destroyed all enemies.

21. O Brāhmaṇas, as a result of his action in previous life that king became a victim of the terrible fell disease of leprosy very difficult to be cured the three worlds.

22. There is no medicine in the world which he did not try, O Brāhmaṇas. There is no gift which the noble-souled king afflicted with leprosy, did not make.

23. The longer he continued to apply medicine and make over gifts, the more afflicted he became due to the disease and turned feeble.

24. Thereupon, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the king became disgusted. He desired to immolate himself in fire, entrusting the kingdom to his son though his wife and loyal attendants prevented him.

25. He made ample religious gifts to Brāhmaṇas and worshipped gods. He held (final) conversations with his group of friends. He instructed his son (the prince). After this he became ready to enter fire.

26. In the meantime, a certain pilgrim endowed with divine form and features came there by chance during the course of his wandering.

27. He found the entire city distressed and morose. O Brāhmaṇas, he became surprised and enquired from a certain person seen by him.

Kārpaṭika (the pilgrim) said:

28. O fair Sir, how is it that the entire city has become upset and gloomy and cheerless? The children and the old people that live here have eyes filled with tears?

The man replied:

29. The king hereof is affected by the fell disease of leprosy. He is disgusted with life and wants to immolate himself in fire.

30. Therefore, the entire city is extremely distressed. Certainly all will meet with their death because they are so overwhelmed by his good qualities.

31. On hearing these words the pilgrim hastened to the king and said:

32-35. It appeared as though he would resuscitate all the people of the king. "O king, do not enter fire due to this grief arising from your disease when a Tirtha capable of dispelling all ailments is available.

O king, my body too was like this as in your case. When I took the holy bath there immediately it became like this, as it is now, O Lord.

A man of the earth who is afflicted with an ailment and who takes his holy bath there at sunrise when Sunday coincides with the seventh lunar day shall instantly be relieved of it. He shall become hale and hearty, O excellent king, and also rid of sins like me."

The king said:

36. Tell me quickly in which country is such a great Tirtha.

Kārpaṭika said:

37. There is the excellent holy place of Nāgaras well-known all over the earth, O king, When I was afflicted with the fell disease of leprosy I went there.

38. In the course of the pilgrimage in which I was engaged, I went there to visit it. On seeing me grief-stricken and wretched, because I was afflicted with the disease a compassionate sage, an inhabitant of that place told me:

39-41a. "To the north-western side of Lord Jalaśāyin (i.e. Lord Viṣṇu sleeping in the ocean) is the highly meritorious Tirtha containing Viśvāmitra *Jala* (The sacred water brought from Pātāla by Viśvāmitra). Go there and take your holy bath on the day when the seventh lunar day coincides with a Sunday

in the bright half of the month of Māgha. Thereby your leprosy will vanish at the time of sunrise."

41bc. On hearing those words, I reached the place on the seventh lunar day in conjunction with the Sun (i.e. Sunday). Then I took the holy bath in the Śāmbhava stream.

42. Then I came out from that (Tīrtha) and when I surveyed my body, O king, it had become like this. It is the truth that is said to you.

43. Hence, O leading king, you too take your holy bath on the *Saptamī* (seventh lunar) day, the day of the week being Sunday at the time of sunrise.

44. Thereby, your illness and the sin as well will perish.

On hearing it, the king hastened in the company of that (Kārpaṭika).

45. On the *Saptamī* day, in the month of Māgha coinciding with a Sunday, he took the holy bath in the auspicious water of Viśvāmitra Tīrtha.

46. Thereby, he instantly became rid of leprosy. Assuming a diving form, he appeared like another Kāmadeva.

47. Then the leading king who was satisfied gave thirty million gold pieces to the Kārpaṭika and spoke these words:

48-49. "It is with your favour that I have been rid of this terrible ailment. Hence you do go home. I will stay here full in contentment.

I shall scrupulously perform the penance everyday in the company of my wife. My son has been enthroned in the kingdom. He is capable of administrating the realm."

50. After saying this, he persuaded him (the pilgrim) and all others who had accompanied him and also his attendants to return home. He himself settled there.

51. He set up his own beautiful hermitage there and stayed there along with his wife. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, in the course of time he attained Siddhi (spiritual perfection).

52. Ever since then this Tīrtha has become well-known after his name in heaven. It dispels all sickness. It is charming and destructive of all sins.

53. Divākara (Sun-god), the Lord of Devas, was installed by him there well-known after his noble name as Ratnāditya.

54. He who takes his holy bath there and visits the deity on the *Saptamī* day in conjunction with a Sunday shall be relieved of sins and go to the world of the Sun.

55. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, listen with concentration. I shall relate what other incident happened in that holy place.

56. There was an aged villager in that land. He was a leper. But he always looked after cows.

57. Once, while he was looking after the beasts (cows) below the mountain, one of his cows strayed from the right track due to its greed for grass.

58. On a Sunday in conjunction with *Saptamī* the cow fell into the stream there. Going ahead thus somehow she was not noticed by him (the cowherd).

59. At home he was getting ready to take his meal, when the owner of the cow came there and rebuked him:

60. "How is it that my cow has not come back to my house? So fetch it soon. If not, I will take away your life."

Sūta said:

61. On hearing it, the leper was terrified. He quickly went along the path whereby he had traversed the ground by day.

62. During the night when darkness had enveloped everything he heard from a distance the cry of that cow that had fallen into the great pit.

63. He went there and got into the water within the pit. With great difficulty he drew up the cow from the horrible muddy expanse. He took her with him and went home slowly.

64. He gave the cow to the owner and went to his own abode.

65. Then he slept, O highly esteemed one. In the morning when he woke up, he found his body rid of leprosy.

66-67. It was highly refulgent. With his eyes beaming with wonder he began to think, 'What is this? The sickness is dispelled! Certainly, this is the power of that Tīrtha full of mud where I fell during the night for redeeming the cow.'

68. He surveyed the body with curiosity. He found that he was rid of all itching sensations and found himself enveloped in refulgence.

69. He went to that holy spot again and realized that it was an excellent Tīrtha. He then meditated upon Divākara and performed a penance there.

70. Alert and active throughout day and night he continued the penance of the deity stationed in the forest. He

attained the greatest Siddhi very difficult even for Devas to attain.

71. Hence, one should exert himself to perform the rite of ablution there.

72. One should also adore Lord Bhāskara, the thief of water. Even today in Kali Age, a man who bathes there becomes pure and clean.

73. He should take his bath in the Kuṇḍa of meritorious waters on Sunday coinciding with the seventh lunar day. He who devoutly worships becomes rid of the sins.

74. He who recites the Gāyatrī Mantra one thousand eight times before the deity, shall be rid of ailments and all the sins.

75. With the deity in view a devotee with perfect faith should make the gift of a cow. No one born of his family will be afflicted with the disease.

76. Thus everything pertaining to Sun-god and his greatness has been narrated by me. By listening to this a man is rid of sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTEEN

Efficacy of Kuhara-vāsi-Sāmbāditya

Sūta said:

1-4. This greatness of Ratnāditya has been spoken to you all. It is destructive of all leprous ailments and all sins. Let a further instance of the greatness of Ravi be listened to.

Formerly there was a certain Brāhmaṇa afflicted with the disease of leprosy. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, staying there he propitiated the Sun-god.

He came to the south-eastern side and made an icon (idol) of the Sun of red sandalwood with the mind sanctified.

Then at the end of a thousand years Divākara was pleased with him. Appearing before him, he said, "I shall grant a boon to you."

The Brāhmaṇa said:

5. O Lord, if you are pleased, cure the sickness due to leprosy. I have no other purpose, not even of the kingdom of heaven.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

6. On the seventh lunar day coinciding with a Sunday take your holy bath in the splendid and auspicious whirlpool, O Brāhmaṇa, and make one hundred eight circumambulations with fruits held in your hand. Then you will be rid of leprosy.

7. Any other man of the earth who performs this Vrata shall be rid of all ailments and will attain my world.

8. [Śrī Sūrya Uvāca.¹] On hearing it the Brāhmaṇa did so with perfect faith. He became rid of leprosy and attained a divine physical form.

9. Lord Ravi (Sun) said again to him when he was rid of the ailments: "O excellent Brāhmaṇa, what other thing pleasing to you shall I carry out?"

10. He said, "O Lord, you always stay here (permanently)."

Śrī Bhagavān said:

11. Henceforth my stay will be in this holy place by the name Kuharavāsa. That will be my designation.

12. Once upon a time, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, there was a son of Viṣṇu (i.e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa) named Sāmba born of Jāmbavatī. He was richly endowed with handsomeness.

13-14. He caused excitement among all women, even mothers, O Brāhmaṇas. When the excellent scion of the family of Yadus went along the highway the women of the city used to look at him with great delight and eagerness. They used to set aside all their domestic chores and come to the windows.

15-18. They were extremely interested in looking at him whose body was similar to that of Kāma. Some of them might have smeared the unguents only partially over their bodies. Some had applied collyrium only to one of the eyes. Others

1. This—*Sūrya uvāca*—is wrongly printed in the text. It should be deleted.

had tied their tresses of hairs very loose (partially). Still others had abandoned their children. Some rushed (to the windows) having woven a shoe on one foot and a sandal on the second. The beautiful women thus ran about. In the case of some other women who rushed to the windows, children and elders getting furious began to shout at them. Their minds were agitated as the knots of their clothes became loose.

19-21. Still those excellent ladies rushed towards the windows. With the rays from his eyes falling on them he pulled their hearts to the ground as it were. He was such a young man on a par with Lord Kāma.

On seeing the beautiful form of Sāmba, a certain beautiful woman felt her limbs scorched with (the fever of) love. She stood motionless (looking at him) as if she was painted in a picture.

22. After seeing him richly endowed with handsome features and youthful form some fell down from the windows (of the upper storey) and lay unconscious on the ground.

23. Other excellent women said to one another, "Only that woman is blessed who has embraced him."

24-26. Throughout the nights in the month of Māgha not only women but even men sat down incessantly talking unrestrictedly such things. They were all surprised at his handsomeness. Others said: "We will (gladly) serve him without any remuneration. Thereby, we can always see his Moon-like face. The elongation of his eyes is undoubtedly restricted by his ears. Otherwise we cannot even imagine how large they would be."

27. Viewed at like this by women and men, he passed through the main street as he was very eager to meet his father.

28. His sisters, mothers, brother's wives—all these and even the ladies of Brāhmaṇa household, came to (attained) such a plight, even his mother's and sisters especially.

29. It was on another day in the rainy season (that this happened) at nightfall. The fortnight was the dark one fully enveloped in darkness. Even what was in front of one could not be seen distinctly.

30. His (step) mother named Nandinī was extremely afflicted by the arrows of Kāmadeva. She assumed the guise of his wife and lay on his couch.

31. Sāmba thought that it was his own beloved and enjoyed the lady thoroughly with diverse kinds of sexual dalliances effectively carried on with unbelievable eagerness.

32-33. The excellent scion of the Yadu family (Sāmba) began to ponder thus, 'The daughter of the king of Aṅga is dearer to me than even my vital breath. She too is not capable of such coitus as has been displayed by this lady. Even courtesans do not know such methods at all.'

34. Then he held in hand firmly and brought a lamp instantly and beheld. Oh, it was his mother who was remembered (by the name) Nandini.

35. Then he censured her: "Fie upon you, O sinful woman! What is this that has been committed by you? It is despised by all the people. It is conducive only to distress in hell."

36. She was overcome with shame and agitated through fear. She disappeared (in darkness) in a moment in the height of her fear.

37. Sāmba lamented in distress. He could not sleep at all. The rest of the night appeared like a hundred years.

38. When the night passed off and the solar disc came up, the son of Hari got up with great grief still harassing him.

39. He eschewed all essential routine activities and summoned an excellent Brāhmaṇa conversant with the injunctions of the scriptural texts. He then said to him:

40-41. He spoke to him secretly with great humility with palms joined in reverence.

Sāmba said:

If one indulges in sexual intercourse with one's mother, sister or daughter, how can one regain purity? Tell me the complete truth after poring over all the scriptural texts in due order.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

42. O dear one, expiatory rite has been laid down in all the scriptural texts, the repositories of Dharma. They are of diverse kinds in the case of (contact) with another woman.

43. Expiatory rites have been proclaimed in the case of these three women and the three men involved for the sake of purity.

44. O scion of the family of Yadu, after indulging in sexual union with one's mother, sister or daughter inadvertently, sensible persons should perform purificatory rites.

For the sake of purity one Tiṅginī rite (see vv 48-53) should be performed. I do not know anything else.

45. In all the scriptural texts this decision has been cited, which I have proclaimed. O leading Yādava, nothing else.

46. On being asked, if anyone mentions any other expiatory rite as he pleases, he shall incur sin like that of the perpetrator himself.

Sāmba said:

47. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, tell me the nature and details of this Tiṅginī rite in full. I have an interest therein.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

48. O Yādava (descendant of Yadu), one should fill a deep pit of one's own size with cowdung powder upto one's own face and stand therein.

49. The cowdung particles are to be strewn, above the head too avoiding the face.

50. Thereafter, it should be set on fire at the region of the foot (of the person undergoing expiation) and the fire should burn slowly.

51. The person standing there should not move his limbs at all. Nor should he cry aloud. He must meditate on Janārdana.

52. When the life becomes extinct, the body is purified.

53. The nature of Tiṅginī has been explained by me. A due performance of this expiatory rite is destructive of great sins.

54. On hearing his words, Sāmba, the son of Jāmbavatī, resolved in his mind that he would perform the expiatory rite of Tiṅginī.

55-61. In an isolated place he spoke to Vāsudeva with contemptuous feelings of hatred (about himself): "O father, I have been deceived by Nandinī, your wife. The sinful woman adopted the guise of my wife. When there was darkness all round she was (carnally) approached by me thinking that it was my own wife.

I came to know the truth through her movements. I censured her and let her off. Ever since then there have appeared the spots of leprosy on my body.

A certain excellent Brāhmaṇa conversant with scriptural texts was asked by me, 'Tell me the expiatory rite for the sin of (carnally) approaching one's mother.'

He said that due performance of Tiṅginī is conducive to my purity. I shall perform it to get redemption from that sin.

Grant me the permission soon so that I can begin (expiatory) procedure. Whatever misdeed have been committed by me during childhood should be exonerated. Do something so that my mother (Jāmbavatī) should not feel sorry.

62. On hearing his words like a blow of thunderbolt, Hari became grief-stricken. His eyes were filled with tears and he spoke in faltering words:

63. "O son, this has not been committed by you deliberately. Since it has not been done knowingly the sin is but little.

64. Only that sin which has been committed knowingly will have everlasting effect, if the king does not restrain him or punish him.

65. Hence, I shall tell you the requisite expiation for the sake of gaining purity, so that your leprosy will be dispelled, O highly esteemed one. I shall tell you what *Dāna* you have to offer.

66. All the statements of sages are either conditional or unconditional. Some are uttered, some are prohibited and some are re-iterated.

67. Hence in this matter, O my son, carry out my instructions. Great welfare will befall you in this world as well as hereafter.

68. In the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara there is the well-known deity Mārtaṇḍa (Sun) installed by Viśvāmītra. The deity is well-known and is destructive of all leprous ailments.

69-71. In the bright half of the month of Mādhava, on the seventh lunar day coinciding with a Sunday and the constellation Piṭṛdaivatya ('having Piṭṛs as the presiding deity' i.e. Maghā) at sunrise a person must make one hundred eight circumambulations with the mind sanctified by faith. He should have with him excellent fruits severally according to the number of circumambulations. Undoubtedly his leprosy will vanish.

72. He who has become free from ailments and made as many circumambulations will be honoured in the world of the Sun for as many Yugas as the number of circumambulations he makes.

73. A man who makes his circumambulations on a Sunday and bows down with great devotion shall also be rid of ailments.

74. Hence, O great king (?) do propitiate Lord Bhāskara in accordance with the procedure which I have mentioned in full to you.

75. Propitiate him quickly with your mind free from confusion, and with the riddance of ailments and sins, you will attain a divine body.

76. Do not feel distressed over the fell disease of leprosy as long as the Lord designated as Kuharāśraya is stationed in that holy spot."

77. Then, on hearing his words, the son of Viṣṇu (Sāmba) set off.

Sūta said:

78. On hearing these words of the Discus-bearing Lord of Devas, Sāmba made up his mind to go to Arbuda (en route to Hātakeśvara).

79. Then, on an auspicious day, that son of Viṣṇu set off surrounded by an army and fully accompanied by elephants, horses and chariots.

80. He was followed for a long distance by Kṛṣṇa unwearyed in his actions and all the mothers with eyes filled with tears.

81. (He was followed by) the heroic Balabhadra, the intelligent Cārūdeṣṇa, Yuyudhāna, Aniruddha and the wise Pradyumna.

82. Thereupon, seeing her own son proceeding ahead towards the holy Tirtha, Jāmbavatī began her lamentations like a female osprey.

83. "Alas! I am doomed. I am ruined. I am unfortunate and deficient in luck. My only son has been reduced to this condition?"

84-85. On seeing her lamenting thus, Madhusūdana said: "Why do you indulge in inauspicious acts even as he is setting

out? Your eyes are filled with tears. You are distressed and your tresses are dishevelled. He will come back to you once again, rid of all his ailments, free from leprosy and fully endowed with the benefit of his pilgrimage."

86. In the meantime Sāmba hurriedly got down from his vehicle and went to the spot where Jāmbavatī was standing.

87. Delighted in his heart, he bowed to her and stood with palms joined in reverence. After bowing down he laughed and spoke these words:

88. "O mother, do not feel distressed in vain on my account. I will return soon concluding my pilgrimage."

Jāmbavatī said:

89. O my dear son, may all the sylvan deities protect you in the forest from all beasts of prey, vampires, and wicked ones all round.

90. May Govinda protect your head. May Madhusūdana protect your neck (throat). May Hṛṣīkeśa protect your hands. May the Slayer of Daityas protect your heart (chest).

91. May Puṇḍarikāṣa protect your stomach. May Gadādhara protect your hips. May Kṛṣṇa protect the pair of your knees; May Dharaṇīdhara protect your feet.

92. Thus (as per *Nyāsa* procedure) she touched the different limbs with her own hand, embraced him and repeatedly sniffed at his head.

93. The renowned lady then bade farewell to her son for whom she had prayed for adequate protection. Then she returned with all the members of Antahpura (Inner Apartment).

94. She was miserable, tears welling up in her eyes. She heaved sighs like a hissing serpentess. So also was Lord Viṣṇu along with all the Yādavas.

95. After bidding farewell to Sāmba, he reentered the city of Dvārakā keeping Balabhadra at the head. His eyes were filled with tears.

96. He entered the city along with his sons, grandsons, friends and kinsmen. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Sāmba set out from Dvārakā.

97. In due course, he reached the confluence of the rivers and the ocean where the deity Yogīśvara had been installed by Ambarīṣa.

98. Lord Viṣṇu, the destroyer of the sins of all creatures still stands there (as Yogīśvara deity). The scion of the Yadu family took his holy bath and worshipped Yogīśvara.

99. Then he offered various gifts to the Brāhmaṇas as well as others, the distressed, the blind and the miserable ones, according to his capacity.

100. The son of Hari gave away whatever is desired by any one such as vehicles, jewels and clothes. He stayed there for three nights with great concentration.

101. Then he went to the hermitage of Cyavana, where Viṣṇu had been installed by Cyavana.

102. The deity that is destructive of all sins is on the sacred banks of Sindhu. There too the Yādava offered gifts to the most important Brāhmaṇas.

103. He gave them every thing that they desired and expressed so. The gift was made in accordance with the rules laid down in the scriptural texts. There too, Sāmba stayed with perfect continence and faith.

104. He halted there for three nights and took regular baths in the auspicious waters of Sindhu. Then he started slowly towards the holy spots beginning with Puṣkara.

105. He continued the journey incessantly meditating on Lord Puṣkaravāsin. The most excellent one among the descendants of Yadu reached Puṣkara in due course.

106. He took his holy bath in the meritorious waters of the Kuṇḍa and offered libations to the Pitṛs and Devas. On a Sunday coinciding with *Saptamī*, he took fruits with him and went to the place where the deity mentioned by Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) was present.

107. He devoutly worshipped Lord Kuharavāsin through garments, unguents, incenses and food offerings of various kinds.

108. Then he made the circumambulations slowly with fruits in his hands. Equipped with the greatest faith, he repeated the Sūryagāyatrī Mantra.

109. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, as he continued his circumambulations of Ravi, the disease of leprosy began to vanish.

110. There, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, in an instant this thought arose in the mind of the intelligent Sāmba: 'I am rid of the disease of leprosy without the least trace of doubt.'

111-112. Whatever had come there along with him in the form of elephants, horses, chariots and jewels he gave unto the Nāgaras entirely in addition to five villages granted by him. After installing Sāmbāditya he started homewards.

113. Whatever few things remained (after giving gifts to Nāgaras), he gifted away devoutly to the Sūryavipras¹ (Brāhmaṇas devoutly worshipping Sun-god) after adoring Divākara.

114. Sām̐ba went home after giving away eight thousand horses, three hundred elephants and six hundred chariots yoked with fast horse as well as an indefinite number of precious stones.

115. If anyone devoutly reads this excellent narrative of Sām̐ba or listens to it, no one in his family will be afflicted with leprosy.

Sūta said:

116. Thus has been fully described to you the excellent fourth Tīrtha of Viśvāmitra, the meritorious Tīrtha causing welfare unto women too.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FOURTEEN

Procedure of Gaṇapati Worship

Sūta said:

1-2. Further, there is another deity installed by Viśvāmitra there, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. It is Gaṇanātha, the bestower of all Siddhis unto men.

He who worships the deity on the fourth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Māgha is rid of all the obstacles for the whole of year.

The sages said:

3. O Sūta, explain to us now the origin of Gaṇanātha. How did he originate? Of what greatness has he been proclaimed?

1. This probably refers to Maga Brahmins, the traditional worshippers of the Sun-god.

Sūta said:

4. He was created by Gaurī from the dirt of her body herself just for sport. He has the limbs of human beings and he looks splendid with an elephantine head.

5. He possesses four hands. He moves about on his vehicle, the mouse. He holds an axe in his hand. He feels satisfied by eating *Modakas* (sweetmeats).

6-7. He is the bestower of all Siddhis in the world especially unto the devotees. Formerly, he fought a formidable battle in the course of hostilities against Tāraka and carried out the task of the Lord, as has never been performed by any one. All the numberless Dānavas were killed.

8. Then this king of the battle-ground was told by the delighted Śakra as he came with all the limbs deeply wounded and covered with blood:

9-11. "O Lord of excellent elephantine countenance, this battle has been fought by you for our sake. Innumerable Dānavas were killed. Hence you will be worthy of the adoration by all the Devas, still more by all the human beings who are always overwhelmed by obstacles?

If at the beginning of their tasks and activities people worship you there is no doubt about it that they will achieve Siddhi (success) in their undertaking. There is my word for it."

12. After saying thus the Thousand-eyed One (Indra) honoured him duly and sent him off to Gaurī and Śaṅkara.

13. This very topic was proposed for discussion by the intelligent Rohitāśva to the great sage Mārkaṇḍeya for the purpose of dispelling all obstacles.

14. O highly esteemed ones, I shall factually mention the same theme. So, listen to the incident of the days of yore, ye all with great concentration.

Rohitāśva said:

15. O holy Sir, all the men here (in this world) are entangled in obstacles in the course of all their auspicious activities, although they themselves are very pure.

16. In all the tasks undertaken, especially in those connected with holy rites, these obstacles crop up whereby the task does not get concluded (successfully).

17. Hence, enjoin to me some Vrata for the purpose of dispelling the obstacles. Let it be a Vrata, Niyama (restraint), penance or Dāna (holy gift).

18. If those rites are performed only once, there should not be any obstacle from birth to death, for the entire period of the life of a man.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

19. In this context, I shall describe to you a Vrata endowed with all good features and also destructive of all obstacles. It quells all sins. It was formerly performed by Viśvāmitra of sanctified soul.

20. The valorous son of Gādhi became well-known as Viśvāmitra. The noble-souled one contracted enmity with Vasiṣṭha.

21. It was for the sake of the Brāhmaṇical status. Somehow, that sage of great penance was not addressed by Vasiṣṭha with the words "You are a Brāhmaṇa". So the enmity ensued.

Rohitāśva said:

22. Why did the Brāhmaṇa Vasiṣṭha not say so by all means, when he was called a Brāhmaṇa by Brahmā and others themselves?

Mārkaṇḍeya said¹:

23. Viśvāmitra was formerly a Kṣatriya king. While hunting, he strayed into the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha. Distressed with hunger and thirst, he entered the hermitage and he was honoured by him (i.e. Vasiṣṭha).

24. He had a cow named Nandinī which always yielded whatever was desired. The cow immediately yielded whatever was desired.

25-26a. Thanks to the power of that cow, the king together with his servants, army and vehicles, was rendered extremely satisfied through different kinds of sweet cooked foodstuffs. Knowing that he was the king of the land, he was duly honoured with *Arghya* and other things as well as foodstuffs.

1. This episode of confrontation between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra for the cow Nandinī is given in Mbh, Ādi 174.

26b. On noticing that everything was the result of the power of the cow, he requested for her against the price of his elephants and horses.

27. The Brāhmaṇa did not give the cow and refused to yield to conciliatory overtures, promise of gifts and to threats. Therefore, the king employed Daṇḍa (the expediency of punishment).

28. The king angrily seized the cow and (was about to take her away).

29. While being taken away she (the cow) said to Vasiṣṭha: "O holy Sir, have I been handed over to the king, for he is taking me away with forceful efforts?"

Vasiṣṭha said:

30. O highly esteemed one, you have not been given away to this king. If he takes you away forcibly, do what is proper.

31. On hearing it the excellent cow Nandini yawned (opened her mouth and made a lowing sound) with the army of the king in view.

32. Then a curling column of smoke arose from her mouth. From it terrible flames issued forth and then thousands of warriors.

33. They held various kinds of weapons and appeared like the messengers of Yama. The Pulindas, Barbaras, Ābhiras, Kirātas, Yavanas and Śakas issued forth thus.

34. They said to her, "Say, O auspicious one, why have we been created?"

Nandinī said:

35. These sinful servants of the king are taking me away forcibly. At my behest all of you should assail them. I do not desire anything else.

36. O great king, that army of Viśvāmitra fought the battle for ten days and got annihilated.

37. On thus noticing the excellent power of a Brāhmaṇa, Viśvāmitra took a vow in a high pitch:

38-39a. "I will undoubtedly become a Brāhmaṇa whereby I too can possess such a wonderful power as this. Hence I shall perform a penance that even Suras cannot perform."

39b. Then he installed his son as king of the realm and performed a great penance.

40. He performed a highly terrible and difficult penance for the sake of Brāhmaṇahood. But Brāhmaṇahood was not attained by him. So he became utterly despondent.

41. Then he went to Kailāsa and perfectly propitiated Maheśvara, the Lord of Devas, Maheśvara accompanied by Gaurī.

42-43. "O Lord, I shall perform a penance for the sake of Brāhmaṇahood. Therefore, I seek refuge in you in Kailāsa, your excellent mountain. Hence, may the Lord of Devas accord protection from obstacles, lest the great penance performed should be destroyed."

Śrī Bhagavān said:

44-45. O excellent king, in connection with your aim, carry out that task which should be performed for the sake of purity. Hence do the worship of Vināyaka. Thereby you will achieve the Siddhi and attain the status of Brāhmaṇa.

Viśvāmītra said:

46. Hence, O excellent one among Suras, explain at the very outset, the method of the adoration of Gaṇeśa for the sake of the suppression of all obstacles, so that I can perform it duly.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

47. Formerly, Gaurī smeared her limbs with some perfumes and unguents. With the dirt thereof she made a being in the form of a man with four arms.

48. In order to play with him saying "my son" the state of childhood was assigned. He had the face of an elephant, a huge body with protruding belly and short thighs.

49. Then I was told by her, "O Lord, let my son be made alive so that he will become most worthy of adoration."

50. Then, O king, uttering *Ṣṣṭisūkta* ('Hymn of Creation') I touched him. When *Jīvasūkta* was uttered, perfectly he became alive.

51. Then the goddess, the daughter of the Mountain, was

told by me in great delight, "The day today is the fourth lunar day and this (boy) has been created by me today.

52. O highly esteemed lady, your son has been created through the power of *jīvasūkta*. O goddess of Suras, he will become the permanent presiding deity of all the Gaṇas of mine. Hence, he will be (called) Gaṇanāyaka.

53-54. O beautiful woman, a devotee should worship him on the auspicious Caturthī day along with the utterance (chanting) of the *jīvasūkta*; with great devotion. O goddess, in all his activities all obstacles shall be destroyed like darkness at sunrise.

55-57. The devotee then utters the following Mantras: "Obeisance to *Lambodara*, obeisance to him, to the Lord of Gaṇas. Obeisance to the Lord holding Kuṭhāra (an axe) for ever. Obeisance to *Vākṣaṅgata* (the eloquent one); obeisance to *Modakabhakṣa* (one who eats sweetmeat). Obeisance to one having a single tooth (i.e. tusk)." After adoring by means of these Mantras the food offering of Modaka is to be made. Then *Arghya* is offered.

58. (The Mantra) "Whatever rite I perform in regard to Śambhu, O Lord, you will ward off the obstacles therein."

59. Then Brāhmaṇas should be fed with the Modakas in accordance with one's capacity. There should not be stinginess in regard to the money spent.

60. O excellent king, I myself said thus to Gaurī with regard to Gaṇanātha.

61-64. Thereupon, the delighted goddess uttered these words: "From today onwards, if anyone perfectly worships my son Gaṇanāyaka in accordance with this procedure on the Caturthī day, all obstacles of his shall undoubtedly vanish.

If any one performs the rites after remembering or worshipping him, all those rites shall become firm. There is no doubt about this that his fortune and glory will be stable (permanent)."

Śrī Bhagavān said:

65. Hence, O highly esteemed one, you also perform perfectly the adoration of Vināyaka so that you will achieve whatever you desire.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

66-67. On hearing his words, King Viśvāmitra duly performed the worship of Gaṇanātha and practised an elaborate penance bereft of obstacles. Then Brāhmaṇahood was also attained which is very rare to get.

68. Hence you also, O highly esteemed one, perform the adoration of Vināyaka specially on the Caturthī day. There is no doubt about this that you will attain all pleasures cherished in the heart.

69. As per words of Maheśvara, one obtains everything if one worships Gaṇanātha with some desire in view.

70. One without a son obtains a son; one without wealth gets great wealth. By remembering Gaṇanāyaka one conquers enemies.

71. If a woman is ugly, or unfortunate, or if she is deserted, by her husband, she regains conjugal felicity through the adoration of Gaṇanātha.

72. If anyone reads this always or listens to this with concentration, he will never meet with obstacles in any of his activities.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Necessity of the Performance of Śrāddha

The sages said:

1. Now tell us, O Sūta, O highly esteemed one, the injunctions regarding the procedure of Śrāddhakalpa in full detail, so that the benefit shall be everlasting.

2. At what time should Śrāddha be performed by those devoted to the Pitṛs? O highly intelligent one, of what nature should the Brāhmaṇas be? What shall be the nature of the articles and requisites?

Sūta said:

3. It was for this purpose that Mārkaṇḍeya, the great sage, was formerly asked, O leading Brāhmaṇas, by Rohitāśva, the son of Hariścandra.

4-5a. When Hariścandra had gone to heaven and king Rohitāśva was established (as a king), the excellent sage Mārkaṇḍeya in the course of his pilgrimage came to take holy bath in the holy confluence of Śarayū.

5b-6. He took his holy bath there and offered libations to the Pitṛs and Devas in accordance with the injunctions. He entered the beautiful and charming city Ayodhyā of truthful name. On hearing that the leading sage was on his way there, Rohitāśva hastened on foot over a long distance to meet him face to face.

7. Then he bowed down his head and stood with palms joined in reverence. He then humbly spoke these sweet words:

8. "O excellent one among sages, welcome unto you. O sage, a very good welcome to you. I am blessed. I have performed meritorious deeds. I have attained the greatest goal since my hairs have been rendered pure by the dust particles of your feet."

9. After saying thus and grasping him by the hand, he took him to the hall of his assembly where there was a large throne.

10. After making the sage seated on the throne, the excellent king sat on the ground with palms joined in reverence.

11-12. He spoke these sweet words in great humility: "O eminent Brāhmaṇa, you are no doubt one with no special desire (for worldly objects). What may be the reason for your visit?

Do tell me now in what way shall I be hospitable to you (How shall I extend the hospitality unto You)? You have come to my abode; I shall give you, O holy Sir, even the things that cannot ordinarily be given."

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

13. We have come here in the course of our pilgrimage to the auspicious confluence of Śarayū. We are proceeding ahead in the morning.

14. Even people without any particular desire should meet righteous, excellent Brāhmaṇas. Brāhmaṇas with scriptures as their eyes and well-versed in the purāṇas say thus:

15. "By meeting a righteous king, viewing a Liṅga that has

sprung up by itself, and seeing a river falling into the ocean, one shall be rid of the sin occurring that day."

16. After saying thus and meeting the tiger among kings standing humbly in front, the excellent Sage made these enquiries:

17. "I hope, the Vedas are fruitful in regard to you. I hope, you have acquired fruitful learning. I hope, your wife is fruitful. I hope, your riches are fruitful."

Rohitāśva said:

18. How do the Vedas become fruitful? How do we know that learning is fruitful? On what basis do we say that the wife is fruitful? How do the riches become fruitful?

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

19. When Agnihotra is performed the Vedas are fruitful. When good manners and habits are acquired learning is fruitful. Sexual pleasure and the progeny are the fruits of having a wife. If gifted and/or enjoyed riches are fruitful.

20. After realizing this, O great king, it does not behove you to do otherwise.

21. These four duties stated by me should be carried out by one who aspires for (the benefit of) the two worlds.

22. After having said thus, the sage made diverse discourses on the saintly kings and ancient celestial sages in particular.

23. Then at the conclusion of one of the discourses, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, King Rohitāśva asked the excellent sage:

24. "O holy Sir, I wish to hear (exactly) about the Śrāddhakalpa, since many versions are met with in the Śrāddha rite of Brāhmaṇas."

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

25. O highly esteemed one, O excellent one among kings, what I have been asked about is true. There are different versions of Śrāddha as established through the different Śākhās (branches or schools of Vedic learning).

26. Hence I shall decisively tell you the exact features of Śrāddha as mentioned formerly by Bharṭṛyajña to the Lord of Ānarta.

27. As Bhartṛyañña was comfortably seated in his hermitage the king and overlord of Ānarta approached him, bowed down and said:

Ānarta said:

28. O holy Sir, tell me now the details of Śrāddhakalpa liked by Pitṛs whereby my Pitṛs can be rendered satisfied on being propitiated through Śrāddha.

29. What is the proper time for the performance of a Śrāddha? What are the requisite things? Do tell me. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, what are the other holy articles befitting Śrāddha? What are those things to be employed by those who desire to give excellent satisfaction to the Pitṛs?

30. Of what nature are those Brāhmaṇas who are mentioned as fit to be invited to Śrāddha? Which types are to be avoided? Explain everything to me in detail.

Bharṭṛyañña said¹:

31. O great king, I shall proclaim unto you the excellent Śrāddhakalpa, on listening to which a man shall attain the benefit of Śrāddha.

32. O king, if creativity and perpetuation of the line is desired. Śrāddha should always be performed by a wise man at the time of *Indukṣaya* (New-Moon day).

33. Just as those who are distressed due to cold desire fire and quilts, so also Pitṛs emaciated through hunger, wish for the waning of the Moon (i.e. the New-Moon).

34. Just as men overwhelmed with poverty desire wealth, so also Pitṛs emaciated through hunger wish for the waning of the Moon (New-Moon day).

35. Just as farmers wish for downpour of rain for the production of vegetation, so also they desire the New Moon for self-satisfaction.

36. Just as Early Dawn (goddess Uṣ-ās) and the ruddy geese desire the appearance of the Sun, so also Pitṛs desire the Śrāddha occurring on the New-Moon day.

1. The procedure of Śrāddha given in the text seems to be prevalent among Nāgara Brāhmaṇas at the time of the final redaction of this text (VI Khanda Skp)

37. If a person performs Śrāddha on a New-Moon day even with water or mere greens, Pitṛs become satisfied and sin vanishes.

38. At the advent of the New-Moon day, groups of Pitṛs resort to the doorsteps of men in the form of air and yearn for the Śrāddha till the sunset as they are agitated due to hunger and thirst.

39. Then, when the sun sets (and no Śrāddha is performed) they are grief-stricken and lose hopes. After heaving sighs for a long time, they censure their descendant.

Ānarta said:

40. O Brāhmaṇa, why is Śrāddha performed on a New-Moon day in particular? Tell me in detail.

41. Dead men attain a goal as effected by their own Karmas. How do they resort to the son (descendant)?

42. This is our great doubt, O Brāhmaṇa, worrying the heart.

Bharṭṛyajña said:

43. O highly esteemed one, the words uttered by you are true. Everywhere dead men attain the goal befitting their Karmas.

44. But I shall tell you how they come to be dependent on their descendant, so that you will have no further doubt.

45. O king, it is not that all who die and go are reborn in the mortal world as long as the line is perpetuated.

46. But men of auspicious nature stay behind in heaven. Those men who are sinful stay in the abode of Yama.

47. They reap the fruit of their own actions by taking up another body. The actions may be auspicious or otherwise as perpetrated by themselves.

48. Whether they stay in Yama's world or in the heavenly world, they do have acute hunger and thirst, O king.

49. O king, this experience of thirst and hunger continues only for three generations of the family of mother or/and father. Beyond it, they reap the fruit, auspicious or otherwise, in accordance with their actions. They do not have either hunger or thirst.

50. In that case, O king, there is the certainty of falling down from their position when the line of their family is broken. All of them do fall down like utensils tied with a cord that snaps and loses support.

51. For this purpose, O king, for the continuity of one's race special efforts should be made by sensible men so that the family line is sustained.

52. There are twelve kinds of sons, *Aurasa* (Bosom-born) etc. If by chance none of them is available for anyone (the following steps are taken).

53. For the purpose of the protection of Pitṛs an *Aśvattha* tree should be planted with a concentrated mind. It should be nourished like a son, O king, without any partiality.

54. That *Aśvattha* should be joined in wedlock with a *Śamī* tree. As long as the earth holds that *Aśvattha*, the family is also sustained.

55. Men who cause that *Aśvattha* plant to grow become rid of sins after falling on the ground (i.e. after death). Endowed with auspiciousness, they attain excellent womb.

56. For this reason food and water should be offered always with the Pitṛs in view, because they are remembered as identical with those (the receivers of food and drink).

57-58. If any one takes food, O king, without offering vegetable dishes to the Pitṛs or if he drinks water without offering water to them, he is a *Pitṛdruha* (enemy of the Pitṛs). If it is not offered by the descendants they do not get water and food even in heaven. They experience terrible pain due to hunger and thirst. Hence one should propitiate the Pitṛs.

59-60. The descendant should propitiate the Pitṛs through water and foodstuffs of various kinds, O king. Similarly, through other things such as garments, food offerings, flowers, scents and unguents too. Through Pitṛmedha and other meritorious *Śrāddhas* of all types high and low, if the Pitṛs are propitiated, they will give all pleasures cherished in the heart. O great king, the Pitṛs propitiated through *Śrāddha* grant *Trivarga* (Virtue, Wealth and Love).

61. Those sinful ones who do not propitiate the Pitṛs always, O king, should be considered brutes having only two feet and bereft of horns.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Origin of Śrāddha

Ānarta said:

1-2. O Brāhmaṇa, there are various other auspicious hours. How then is Śrāddha specifically enjoined at the time of the waning of the Moon (New-Moon day)? O great sage explain this in its details entirely.

Bharṭṛyaṇa said:

3. It is true, O great king, that there are many auspicious hours that accord satisfaction and delight to Pitṛs.

4. They are Manvādis (annual day signifying the beginning of the Manvantaras), Yūgādis (annual beginning day of yugas); Saṅkrāntis (days of the transit of the Sun), Vyatīpātas, Gajacchāyā, the eclipse of the Sun and the Moon in full.

5. On these occasions, it is proper to perform Śrāddha for the satisfaction of the pitṛs. Further, it is all the more proper (fruitful); if performed in a Tīrtha or an auspicious and sacred shrine.

6. Even on non-Parvan (festival) occasions, sensible persons should perform Śrāddha always with the collaboration of Brāhmaṇas eligible for Śrāddha duly through the requisite articles readily available or liked by Pitṛs.

7. The time of the waning of the Moon (New Moon) is specifically suitable for it. O king, listen with concentration. Amā is that portion of the Sun near (consisting of) the thousand rays (*obscure*).

8. It is through the refulgence thereof that the Sun is called the lamp of the three worlds. Because the Moon stays there at that part called Amā that it is called Amāvāsyā (*obscure*).

9-12. That day (Amāvāsyā) is of everlasting benefit in all religious rites and particularly in the rites of the Pitṛs.

Nine groups of Pitṛs of divine origin are well-known: (1) Agniṣvātas, (2) Barhiṣads, (3) Ājyapas, (4) Somapas, (5) Raśmīpas, (6) Upahūtas, (7) Āyantunas (those invoked by the utterance *āyantu* (let them come)), (8) Śrāddhabhuks and

(9) Nāndīmukhas. O king, Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras and the two Aśvins named Nāsatyas propitiate these Pitṛs excluding Nāndīmukhas. O excellent king, they are the Pitṛs ordered by Brahmā.

13. The Lotus-born Lord begins (work of) creation after propitiating them.

14. Other Pitṛs of human beings begin too stay in heaven. They are viewed as of two kinds: the happy ones and the unhappy ones.

15. All those are called Samhṛṣṭas (Happy Ones) to whom Śrāddhas are offered in the mortal world by the descendants. They stay there happily.

16. Those to whom the descendants do not offer anything, remain distressed due to hunger and thirst. They appear very unhappy.

17. Once upon a time, all the Pitṛs viz. Agniṣvāttas and others (regularly) adored by Suras approached the Lord of Devas.

18. O great king, they were devoutly welcomed and adored by the Thousand-eyed Lord as well as by all the other Devas. Then they started for their own abode.

19-20. O great king, on seeing them proceeding towards Pitṛloka, rarely accessible even to gods, those Pitṛs who originated from human beings were afflicted with hunger and thirst. They spoke piteously after eulogizing them with divine hymns and Pitṛ-Sūktas.

21. They eulogized through other Sūktas too causing satisfaction to the Pitṛs mentioned in the Veda. Thereupon, the Pitṛs originating from Suras spoke to them joyously:

22. "O (ye Pitṛs) of praiseworthy vows, all of us are glad. Hence speak out what is cherished in the heart. We shall grant it."

The Pitṛs (of human origin) said:

23. We are well-known as the Pitṛs of human beings. We have come here to the heavenly world as a result of our Karma. We stay with Suras always.

24. We go in all directions seated in aerial chariots of various kinds. We go to the desired worlds (in those chariots) decorated with flags and banners.

25. To the aerial chariots are yoked swans and peacocks. They are attended upon by groups of celestial damsels. Gandharvas sing about us. Guhyakas eulogize us.

26. But, despite our stay along with Tridaśas (Devas), we are afflicted excessively with terrible hunger and thirst.

27. Due to that we feel in our mind as though we are in the centre of fire. Sometimes we think thus: 'Shall we swallow these different kinds of birds such as swans etc. chirping sweetly, or even the groups of celestial damsels.'

28. But, if one (of us) afflicted with hunger seizes some birds secretly, he is still unable to kill for the sake of eating.

29. The birds in the heavenly world are devoid of death and old age. So also are the charming trees in the parks, Nandana etc.

30-31. We have easy access to these fascinating trees that appear laden with fruits. But when we (the Pitṛs) try to pluck the fruits thereof, they cannot be cut or split even when tossed and crushed with effort. If we try to drink the water of the celestial Gaṅgā when thirsty, the water does not touch our hands.

32. Further, no one is seen here eating or drinking. Hence this stay in heaven is extremely unbearable to us.

33. All these groups of Suras and the others such as Guhyakas etc. are seen seated in aerial chariots. All of them seem to be delighted in their minds.

34. They are bereft of hunger and thirst. They can and do enjoy various pleasures. Shall we be like them at any time?

35. Can we also be without hunger and thirst, enjoying the height of satisfaction? So, what is the cause that brings about hunger and thirst?

36. We get accidental and unaccountable affliction. It never leaves us off. Do something whereby there shall be satisfaction. Welfare unto you.

37. Let our satisfaction be permanent as in the case of other Devas and Heaven-dwellers. Indeed, you are the Pitṛs of Devas of the purified souls.

38. We, on the other hand are the Pitṛs of human beings. So we seek refuge in you.

The Pitṛs (of celestial origin) said:

39. We too have such troublesome plight. When Śakra and

other Devas are distracted and do not offer Śrāddha to us, we approach them all and request them.

40-42. Then the Devas propitiate us and we feel satisfied.

Your descendants in the family do offer Śrāddha with concentration. How are you not satisfied when propitiated by them?

If they are not being propitiated (with libations) in any way by their blundering descendants, there is no doubt that all of them will be overwhelmed with hunger and thirst. All the more so in the case of those who are staying in hell in the abode of Dharmarāja.

43. This is the reason cited for the unbearable sufferings of yours arising from hunger and thirst as said by you now.

44. Therefore, O excellent ones, if all of you (agree to) offer share in the *Kavya* offered (to you) we shall render auspicious benefit unto you.

45-47. We shall ourselves go to Brahmā and request him to do so.

When they said "So be it", the Pitṛs of divine origin went to the excellent abode of Vidhi (Brahmā) taking human Pitṛs too with them. They kept at their head the Pitṛs called Nāndimukhas whom Vidhi, the Lord of Suras, propitiates at the time of creation as he is desirous himself of prosperity.

Then all of them eulogized the Lotus-seated One and bowed down to him. All the Pitṛs then stood with modesty.

48. O eminent king, when those modest Pitṛs bowing down in due respect stood thus, Vidhi spoke to them consoling them with smooth, soothing words:

Brahmā said:

49. Why have all the Pitṛs approached me? You are worthy of the adoration of all the Devas including myself.

50. Further, others are also seen associated with you, they have the form and features of human beings but their refulgence is inferior.

The Pitṛs said:

51. These are the Pitṛs of human beings. They have come to heaven through their karmas. They stay in the midst of Devas but they are afflicted with hunger and thirst.

52. When due to negligence the descendants do not offer Kavya, they are not satisfied though they move about in aerial chariots like Suras.

53. Then they made this request to us for permanent satisfaction. But we are unable to offer them. So we came to you.

54. When Devas are (otherwise) busy, O Lord of Suras, our state too will be similar due to the absence of Kavya.

55. Hence, O Lord of Suras, be favourable to us as with them and do manage things so that we shall have permanent satisfaction while we are in our own abodes.

56. These (Pitṛs) will offer us (share in) the Kavya offered to them by their own descendants. That is why, O Lord, we have come to you.

57. The Kavya offered by the Devas does not satisfy us because it is devoid of holy rites. They do not perform the holy rites.

58. The Kavya offered to Brāhmaṇas with the Pitṛs in view by human beings wearing washed clothes after having their ablation shall be conducive to great satisfaction.

59. O Lord of all the Devas, that shall be conducive to the satisfaction of the Pitṛs. So says the Vedic utterance. Unlike the twice-born (Brāhmaṇas) the Devas are not entitled to the holy ablation.

60-61. So, even the Piyūṣ (Nectar) offered by them to us is not conducive to our satisfaction as with the Kavya offered by them, O Lord.

Hence, do manage it in such a way that even stationed in Svarga, we shall have great satisfaction along with these (Pitṛs).

Bharṭṛyajña said:

62. On hearing it, Brahmā, the grandfather of all the worlds, meditated for a long time, O excellent one among kings, and said to all those Pitṛs:

Brahmā said:

63. The term Havya or Kavya was used in the Tretā Yuga. It will be used in two Yugas (viz Tretā and Dvāpara). It will not be effective in Kali Age (*Defective text*).

64. As and when the Yugas become reduced (quantitatively and qualitatively) people will become more and more wicked with devotion turned elsewhere.

65. They will not at all offer Kavya as stipulated. Thereupon, the plight of Pitṛs will be more and more pitiable.

66. Hence I shall suggest an easier means of happiness in the case of embodied beings. Then, on being propitiated thereby, you will attain great satisfaction.

67-68. O Pitṛs, all the Pitṛs upto my own self shall be extremely delighted through what is offered devoutly to the Brāhmaṇas with the father, grandfather and his father (i.e. great-grandfather) in view. The same manner is to be adopted in the case of maternal grandfathers also. There is no doubt in this matter.

69-71. When the three (preceding) generations are propitiated, all those Pitṛs upto my own self are also propitiated. O highly esteemed ones, even as I expatiate now, listen to the easy means conducive to your satisfaction. With the Pitṛs in view, the descendants shall propitiate the excellent Brāhmaṇas by means of cooked rice. With that very cooked rice, they should offer Piṇḍas (rice-balls) unto you all. Thereby under that name, you will have permanent satisfaction.

72. Hence, O ancestors, go back to your own abodes fully satisfied.

73. Thereupon, O excellent king, they all went to their abodes together by means of aerial chariots as refulgent as the sun.

74. As time passed on, O king, men did not offer even that Śrāddha covering three generations.

75. O king, many here did not offer the Śrāddha every day with the Pitṛs in view. They did not offer shares in the Kavyas as before.

76. As before, O king, they experienced great pain arising from hunger and thirst. This happened to the Pitṛs of divine origin too, O excellent king.

77. Again all of them collectively sought refuge in Brahmā. In their desperate plight, they bowed down and spoke loudly to Prapitāmaha:

78-79. "O holy Sir, O Lord, our descendants do not offer

the daily Śrāddhas. Therefore, we have been (reduced to) wretchedness and languish much. O Lord, think of some means as before, whereby even poor people can propitiate the Pitṛs."

Bhartr̥yajña said:

80. On hearing their words Prapitāmaha (Brahmā) was moved with pity, O great king. He spoke to all those groups of Pitṛs:

81. "O highly esteemed ones, it is true that people meet with miserable plight every day as the excellent Yuga recedes back.

82. Yet I shall, for your sake, arrange an easy means whereby you will have satisfaction.

83. What is called *Amā* is stationed very near the thousand-rays of the Sun. Since Indu (Moon) resides therein it is called *Amāvāsyā*.

84. Those men who perform Śrāddha devoutly on that day with their Pitṛs in view, shall become well-settled.

85. You have my word for it undoubtedly that they will be equipped with wealth and foodgrains. They will be rid of all enemies. They will never meet with premature death."

Bhartr̥yajña said:

86. On hearing his words, the Pitṛs became delighted in their minds. On getting (an opportunity for) *Kavya*, they were all the more delighted.

87. Sent off by the Lotus-born Lord, they went to their own abodes. On the *Amāvāsyā* day (New Moon) Śrāddha was offered by the descendants of their families.

88. They felt satisfied for a month and remained glad in their minds.

As time went on, men on the earth became wretched. Some of them did not regularly offer Śrāddha even on the *Darśa* (New-Moon day)

89. Thereupon, all the groups of Pitṛs both of divine and human origin, were again afflicted with hunger and thirst. They then sought refuge in *Brahmā*.

90. They collectively bowed down to Pitāmaha and spoke loudly in their excessive grief and wretchedness in words choked with tears:

91-93. "O Lord, it was said by you that men will be performing the Śrāddha for our propitiation lasting for a month.

On account of wretchedness and poverty, O Pitāmaha, they do not perform even that usually. Therefore, our affliction due to hunger and thirst is excessive.

Hence, O Lord of Suras, be favourably disposed towards us as before, so that even the most miserable ones will propitiate us now."

Bhartr̥yāṇa said:

94. Then Brahmā, the compassionate one, thought over the matter and spoke to them: "O Pitṛs, an easy means has been thought of by me for your sake.

95. O leading Pitṛs, thereby you will attain great satisfaction even if you do not get the Śrāddha on the Amāvāsya day for a whole year.

96-97. Listen with concentration how you will attain it with my favour.

In the fifth fortnight from Āṣādhī (Full-Moon day in the month of Āṣāḍha) when the Sun is in Virgo devout man shall offer Śrāddha on the day of death (i.e. the lunar day anniversary of the death). Certainly his Pitṛs will be satisfied for a full year.

98. By realizing, thus, men on the earth will perform Śrāddha in the *Pretapakṣa* (the fortnight of the departed). There is no doubt. You will become well propitiated.

99-101. O excellent ones, as a result of that single (Śrāddha) you will attain a year-long satisfaction. Even on that day if a wretched man does not perform Śrāddha unto you with at least some green vegetable, he will attain *Antyajatva* (Sūdra status). Men who are in contact with them by sitting together in the same seat, lying on the same bed, taking food with them, touching them or holding conversation with them, shall be great sinners. Their progeny will never flourish.

102. They will have no happiness, wealth or foodgrains by any means. Hence, O Pitṛs, do return to your abode without (mental) agitation as quickly as possible.

103. Even in Kali Age that is horrible, even when they are penniless, men shall perform at least one Śrāddha at the end of a year.

104. Thereby, you will have excellent satisfaction through-out the year."

Bhartr̥yayāna said:

105. On hearing it, the Pitṛs became delighted. They went to their respective abodes. Getting a Śrāddha at the end of a year at least they never felt hungry.

106. But, Alas! those miserly fellows, the wicked souls deluded by Kali, unhesitatingly abstained from performing Śrāddha even at the end of a year.

107. Once again their Pitṛs accompanied with celestial Pitṛs sought refuge in Brahmā. Grief-stricken in their minds, they spoke to him:

108. "O Lord, even at the end of a year when the Sun is in Virgo, our descendants, the wicked souls, do not offer Śrāddha.

109. Thereby, O Lord, we are extremely afflicted with hunger and thirst. We do seek refuge in you. Do arrange for the remedy thereof.

110. As before, O highly esteemed one, do tell an easy means whereby, through a single day Śrāddha we will have permanent satisfaction.

111. If the family becomes extinct it is sure that we will be faced with downfall."

Bhartr̥yayāna said:

112. On hearing their words, Pitāmaha was overwhelmed with great pity. He meditated for a long time and then spoke solicitously.

Brahmā said:

113. Another means has been thought of by me for the purpose of your satisfaction. It is a very easy one and thereby you will have permanent satisfaction.

114. If they go to Gayāśiras and offer a single Śrāddha you will have permanent satisfaction. By its power you will attain divine goal.

115-116. A person may be very sinful. An embodied one may be the slayer of a Brāhmaṇa. A person may be stationed in the hell Raurava or Kumbhīpāka. He may be in the state of a ghost. But if the descendant of his family offers him Śrāddha at Gayāśiras he will be liberated.

117. After hearing these words of mine, men on the earth now will perform a Śrāddha there in Gayāśiras even if they are penniless. It is obviously conducive to your liberation.

Bhartr̥yāṇa said:

118. On hearing those words of Parameṣṭhin and permitted by him, they resorted to their own abodes.

119. Ever since then Śrāddhas began to be performed on the earth with the offerings of rice-balls for upto three generations of ancestors.

120-121. O king, in accordance with their capacity, with all the members of the family in view, those who, beginning with Brahmā, had gone to the other world, they used to give to leading Brāhmaṇas whatever they desired and their number was equal to that of the number of members of the family who passed away. This Śrāddha with no deity (to preside over) is conducive to the happiness of poor people. (*obscure*)

122. It accords excellent satisfaction to Pitṛs, Devas and human beings. Hence Śrāddha should be specially performed by a sensible person.

123. If one wishes for the satisfaction of the Pitṛs one should perform the Śrāddha on these specific occasions with proper effort. If he wishes for prosperity in both the worlds, he should specifically perform it at Gayā.

124. If a man does not offer Śrāddha unto the Pitṛs during the waning of the Moon (New-Moon day) his Pitṛs will be very miserable and overwhelmed with hunger and thirst.

125. Just as farmers await clouds day and night without relaxation, so also the Pitṛs eagerly wait for the Pretapakṣa (the fortnight of the Pitṛs i.e. the dark half of Bhādrapada) with great eagerness.

126. They desire that the Śrāddha should be offered by

their sons (and descendants) during the period till the Sun is in the zodiac Virgo after the expiry of the Pretapakṣa.

127. O king, some of the Pitṛs who are agitated due to hunger and thirst desire that Śrāddha should be performed by their descendants even while the Sun has entered the zodiac Libra.

128. If that period passes off and the Sun enters Scorpio the Pitṛs become disappointed and distressed. Then they go back to their abodes.

129. Resorting to the threshold of their abodes, the Pitṛs of men remain waiting for two months. Distressed due to thirst, emaciated due to hunger, they remain thus in gaseous form.

130-131. Thus, O king, Śrāddha should be offered always by one who wishes for the satisfaction of the Pitṛs as long as the Sun is in Virgo and Scorpio, on the Darśa (New-Moon) day in accordance with the utterance of Brahmā.

O king, libation with water mixed with gingelly seeds is also specially recommended on the authority of Brahmā's words.

132-133. Even when he has no wealth, a learned man should offer Śrāddha on the Darśa day. If that is missed the Śrāddha is performed when the Sun is in Virgo. If that too is missed Śrāddha should be performed once in Gayā, thereby, one attains the benefit of the Śrāddha offered daily.

134-135. Thus, O king, whatever I was asked has been told by me. Why Śrāddha is performed by the people devoted to the Pitṛs particularly on New-Moon day and especially during Pretapakṣa, was the question and I have answered it.

136. He who listens to this meritorious narrative of the origin of Śrāddha or reads it shall be rid of all blemishes and attain the benefit of offering Śrāddha itself.

137. If a man reads this origin of Śrāddha on the occasion of Śrāddha that Śrāddha will become everlasting and also free from all defects.

138-139. In case the materials used are defective and impure, the Brāhmaṇas are unworthy, the food is consumed without relish, or there is no chanting of the requisite Mantras everything shall be rectified and be deemed complete, O excellent king, if this origin of Śrāddha is recited or listened to.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Śrāddha: Proper Time, Eligible Brāhmaṇa etc.

Ānarta said:

1. O great sage, tell me entirely the procedure whereby all Śrāddha should be performed. I have great faith therein.

Bhartr̥yajña said:

2-3. Listen, O king, I shall explain the excellent procedure of Śrāddha which always accords satisfaction to Pitṛs and which bestows the cherished desires on men.

All the rites connected with Śrāddha should be performed by means of the money earned through one's own labour and not appropriated through deception etc., or stealth or fraudulent means or by cheating others.

4. One should gather together the requisites for Śrāddha through money earned by means of one's own avocation. In the case of Brāhmaṇas, money and articles received in the course of excellent *Prātigrahas* (religious gifts) are worthy of approval.

5. Śrāddha can be properly performed by a king through the sum raised by him in the course of his pursuits for defence (of the realm and the people), by a Vaiśya through the products of his field and by a Śūdra through what is obtained by means of trade and services.

6-7. After all the materials and money have been rendered available at home through faultless means on the previous day itself, a householder should be scrupulously clean and bereft of lust and anger. He should then go to the house of Brāhmaṇas worthy of Śrāddha and invite them. The order of priority is as follows: Yatis (ascetics), then Snātakas (initiated ones who have completed their studies), and then Brahmakarmīns (those who regularly perform Brāhmaṇical rites).

8-9. If they are not available, the following may be invited: householders devoted to the knowledge of Brahman, Brāhmaṇas engaged in Agnihotra, those who are experts in the Vedic lore, those who can chant Vedic passages, elderly people engaged always in the Śaṭkarmas (six duties of Brāhmaṇas), those who

have a large circle of kinsmen and servants and poor people with good qualities.

10. They should not be deficient in limbs. They should be free from ailments. They must have control over their diet. They must be clean in habits. O king, it is proclaimed that these will be the Brāhmanas worthy of Śrāddha.

11. Listen. I shall tell you, who they are who have been proclaimed as unworthy: Those who are deficient in or have surplus limbs: gluttons who eat everything. *Nirākṛtis*¹ (those who neglect their Brāhmanical duties);

12. black-toothed ones; those whose teeth are not fit to work properly; those who sell the Vedas; those who disparage the Vedas; those who are devoid of Vedic and Śāstraic knowledge;

13. those with defective nails; sickly ones; doubly nude ones (i.e. those who have circumcised the prepuce); those who injure others; those indulging in scandals; atheists; liars;

14. those who maintain themselves by usury; those engaged in misdeeds; those who never care for pure and clean habits; too tall ones; lean ones, stout men; hirsute and shaggy ones.

15. Those who have no hair (on the body) should be excluded in Śrāddha rite if a householder desires to honour the Pitr̥s. Similarly those who are devoted to other men's wives and he who is the husband of a Vṛṣālī should be avoided.

16. A *Vanḍhyā* (barren women) is also said to be Vṛṣālī. So also one whose child is dead. Another Vṛṣālī is a virgin in the menses.

17. (These are avoided:) a eunuch; a robber; a hypocrite; those whose profession is indulging in scandalising kings; a son of one through a Sagotrā (wife of the same family); and a son of *Ekaprarāṇā* (of the same lineage).

18. Younger brother who performs the *Ādhāna* rite (*Agnihotra*) before (the elder brother), who marries before him and who becomes initiated before him, should be avoided, if he is associated with his house (or along with his house) (*grhasamṃyutaḥ*).

19-20. One should avoid these for a Śrāddha: a person who abandons his father and mother; one who defiles the

1. Cf. *Smṛti-candrikā*: Śrāddha-kalpa, pp. 396-402.

preceptor's bed; one who abandons an innocent wife; and one who is ungrateful and is always eager to seize and drag (valuable things); one who sustains himself by craftsmanship; one who bungles; one whose avocation is trading and one who manufactures weapons. All those should be avoided if their antecedents are not known.

21. Henceforth, I shall enumerate those who are recommended for the Śrāddha rite: Brāhmaṇas who have been proclaimed earlier as *Pañktipāvanas* (those who purify the rows of people at meals);

22. those who mastered the set of three Madhu and Suparṇa Mantras and maintain three Naciketa fires; one who is conversant with the six Aṅgas; one who has taken the valedictory bath after concluding Vedic study; one who regularly reads Dharmaśāstras;

23. one who is conversant with the Purāṇas; a learned one who knows Jyeṣṭhasāman, who should be known as a wise man; so also a knower of *Atharvaśiras*; those who visit Kratus and perform excellent rites;

24. one who washes immediately (after being soiled); one with bright fame; son of a daughter; son-in law; nephew; and one who is engaged in helping others;

25. one who eats sweet food (prepared in Śrāddha); one of sweet speech; one who is always engaged in Japa—all these Brāhmaṇas are to be known as entirely sanctifiers of rows (of learned men).

26. Those despicable Brāhmaṇas who mingle with these should not be excluded, if they are born of a noble family. They too cause satisfaction to the Pitṛs by taking food in Śrāddha.

27. Hence, by all means, the nobility of the Brāhmaṇas should be traced and found out at the outset and the conduct, age and name, matrimonial alliance (should be known) after enquiring about these.

28. A man who offers right of performing Śrāddha rite to a man bereft of learning and good conduct in spite of his being conversant with Dharmaśāstra or offers his daughter in marriage, blunders. It is as though he has performed Homa without fire (i.e. in ashes).

29. It is as though he had sown seeds in an arid land or

threshed the chaff. So one should engage only persons of good family endowed with good conduct, in the performance of Śrāddha.

30. O tiger among kings, one should engage such Brāhmaṇas even if they are endowed only with inadequate learning. After realising this, their feet should be grasped.

31-33. With the left hand (first) and then with the right hand and then with both the hands, the feet should be grasped. They should be repeatedly bowed down to in accordance with one's (physical) ability.

While stroking the right knee, the devotee should utter the following Mantra: "May the extremely powerful and highly esteemed Viśvedevas invoked devoutly by me come over here. (O Brāhmaṇa,) you too shall observe the Vrata (such as eschewing anger, observing celibacy etc.). After inviting the pair (of Brāhmaṇas) thus for the sake of Viśvedevas (they should proceed ahead thus).

34-35. After wearing the sacred thread (*Yajñopavīta*) on the right shoulder, one should invoke three Brāhmaṇas (as representing three Pitṛs) according to one's capacity, one Brāhmaṇa separately representing the father, the grandfather and the great-grandfather or one may invoke one for three.

This very procedure is prescribed for invoking Brāhmaṇas for the Pitṛs on mother's side (i.e. mother's father, grandfather, great-grandfather).

36-37. The person then touches the feet of the Brāhmaṇa and utters this with the mind sanctified with faith. He should be endowed with devotion to his Pitṛs : "Let my father and his father accompanied by his own father come over to this physical body of yours. You, do observe the Vrata."

38. After invoking the Pitṛs and Mātāmahas (maternal grandfather etc.) the Brāhmaṇas invited remain with their selves duly controlled.

39. The Yajamāna (householder) should observe celibacy and remain quiescent in his mind. After passing the night, the man should get up early in the morning.

40. On that day (Śrāddha-day) he need not recite the Vedic portion. He shall avoid anger and despised activities, oil bath, physical fatigue, journey and going far in vehicles.

41. At the hour named *Kutapa* when the Sun reaches the

middle of the sky, the person takes his holy bath and wears white clothes. He should propitiate the Pitṛs and Devas as well as the invited Brāhmaṇas. Then he performs the Śrāddha.

42. The place should be isolated, charming in a central place in the house (the floor) sloping to the South. It shall be protected from the view of sinners and persons of cruel activities.

43. A Śrāddha viewed by a woman in the menses, a fallen man, a hog or a dog shall be fruitless.

44. A Śrāddha in which stale cooked rice, flour cake etc. smeared with oil (instead of ghee) or foodstuffs defiled by hair or other articles of despicable nature etc. are given shall be fruitless.

45. A Śrāddha in which the performer has no faith or devotion, in which silence is not observed and wherein requisite Dakṣiṇā is not offered becomes futile.

46. A Śrāddha wherein the sounds of grinding stone, mortar and winnowing basket are heard shall become futile.

47. If, when Śrāddha is being performed, some sort of quarrel breaks out and the seating arrangement in rows (of Brāhmaṇas) is disturbed that Śrāddha becomes futile.

48. If a Śrāddha is performed early in the forenoon, during dusk or dawn or at night or under the open sky (with no roof or cover) or in an uncovered place that Śrāddha becomes futile.

49. O king, if, in a Śrāddha the householder offers food without observing rules of celibacy, or the Brāhmaṇa partakes of the food without being celibate, that Śrāddha becomes worthless.

50. If the following is offered in a Śrāddha it shall be futile: grain along with the husk; legume offered after making it Uchchiṣṭa (partly chewed: sipped etc.), ghee or milk left over in vessel etc.

51. O king, listen with attention, I shall enumerate the periods and occasions in which, if Śrāddha is offered it becomes everlasting in its benefit.

52. I shall mention the *Manvādī Tīthis* (lunar days marking the beginning or anniversaries of Manvantaras etc.). Listen to them. They are always endearing to Pitṛs. They are conducive to destruction of all sins.

53. During the *Manvādi* days, even if mere water mixed with gingelly seeds is offered to Pitṛs and poured on the ground with mind sanctified with faith, it has everlasting benefit.

54-57 The *Manvādis* are the following:

	<i>Tithi</i>	(Lunar days)	Fortnight (Pakṣa)	Month
1.	9th		Bright	Āśvina
2.	12th		Bright	Kārttika
3.	3rd		Bright	Caitra
4.	3rd		Bright	Bhādrapada
5.	15th	(New-Moon day)	Dark	Phālguna
6.	11th		Bright	Pauṣa
7.	10th		Bright	Āṣāḍha
8.	7th		Bright	Māgha
9.	8th		Dark	Śrāvaṇa
10.	15th	Full-Moon day	Dark	Āṣāḍha
11.	15th	Full-Moon day	Dark	Kārttika
12.	15th	Full-Moon day	Dark	Phālguna
13.	15th	Full-Moon day	Dark	Caitra
14.	15th	Full-Moon day	Dark	Jyēṣṭha

I have enumerated the *Manvādi Tithis*. O king.¹

58. If a devotee takes bath and offers even water mixed with Darbha and gingelly seeds with the Pitṛs in view on these days, he attains the greatest goal.

59. He attains the goal in this world as well as in the other world, with the favour of the Pitṛs. All the more so if they offer different kinds of gems, juices, garments and monetary gifts.

60. Now, O great king, listen to the *Yugādis* (days marking the beginning of the Yugas). They are dear to Pitṛs. By the mere mentioning of these, series of sins becomes dispelled.

61-62. The Navamī of the bright half of Kārttika is the first day of Tretā; the Tṛtīyā of the bright half of Vaiśākha is the first day of Kṛtayuga; the Amāvāsyā of Māgha is the first day of Kali and the Trayodaśī of Bhādrapada is the first day of Dvāpara. They are excellent for holy ablution, *Dāna*, *Japa*, *Homa* and libation to Pitṛs.

63-65. They give everlasting benefit to the rite performed

1. SkP VII. i.205.36-39 differs slightly in the above order.

and great benefit to the holy performance:

When the Sun is in the zodiac Meṣa (Aries) or Tulā (Libra) it is called *Viṣuva* (equinox). This period causes everlasting benefit.

O king, when the Sun is in the zodiac Capricorn and Cancer it is called *Ayana* (Transit). *Viṣuva* is more excellent. The movement of the Sun in the zodiac is called *Samkrānti*.

66-67. They accord great benefits through holy ablution, *Dāna*, *Japa*, *Śrāddha*, *Homa* etc. Now the periods of the beginning of Tretā etc. and the Samkrāntis, have been mentioned. Whatever is gifted on these occasions is free from obstacles. That is everlasting in benefit.

Even if anything is given away carelessly to undeserving persons, during inopportune moments, it yield everlasting benefit.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

Rules Prescribed for Śrāddha Performance

Bharṭṛyajña said:

1-3. It has been mentioned in general as to how Śrāddha has to be performed by man of all castes beginning with Brāhmaṇas, O excellent king.

Henceforth, I shall mention what is proclaimed in the case of one's own Śākhā, how Śrāddha pertaining to one's own *Deśa* (land) and *Varṇa* (caste) is to be performed so that there shall be satisfaction.

Śraddhā (faith) is the basic sentiment in a Śrāddha, Hence, it is called Śrāddha. If that is performed duly nothing goes in vain.

4-5. Hence, O great king, one should perform Śrāddha even if one dislikes it. If the water with which the feet of Brāhmaṇas are washed, falls on the ground all those ancestors of the family who happened to die without sons, attain the greatest satisfaction like the Suras getting satisfaction through *Amṛta*.

6. As long as the ground remains wet due to the water from the feet of Brāhmaṇas, so long the Pitṛs drink water in the leafy cups of lotus.

7-8. O Lord of men, whatever falls on the ground when Śrāddha is being performed, such as flower, scent, water and cooked rice, those ancestors who have attained the state of worms, brutes or tigers (or pythons) get the greatest satisfaction.

9. Those who have attained the state of ghosts derive satisfaction through the *Ucchuṣṭa* (remnants and leavings of food particles) falling from the washing of the utensils.

10-11. All those of the same family who had a premature or accidental death, attain satisfaction when *Vikira* (scattered or fallen particles of food etc.) is offered. The *Vikira* in the Darbha grass and the leavings of food if offered to the following, they attain satisfaction: those who are dead but were not cremated duly and those who had abandoned women of nobility.

12. With the offering of the monetary gift a Śrāddha becomes perfect even if there had been deficiencies (and omissions) in regard to Mantras, stipulated timings and proper procedure.

13. Hence no Śrāddha deficient in Dakṣiṇā should be performed by a learned man who wishes permanent satisfaction of the Pitṛs as well as of himself.

14. A Śrāddha without Dakṣiṇā is like the shower of rain on an arid land (barren area), a dance in darkness and singing a song near the deaf.

15. After performing Śrāddha as well as partaking of the food therein, one shall be free from covetousness. Self-study of the Vedas should not be pursued (on that day). The Brāhmaṇa should not go to any other village too.

16. If a partaker of the food at Śrāddha shares the bed of his wife on that day, his Pitṛs shall be taking in semen for the whole of that month.

17. If a partaker of the food at Śrāddha and the householder who performed the rite indulges in sexual intercourse, his pitṛs will be taking in *Śukra* (semen) for the whole of the year, O king, There is no doubt about it. This is a Vedic utterance.

18. If a man deficient in intellect pursues the self-study of the Vedas after partaking of the food at a Śrāddha or performing it, O king, his Pitṛs will be afflicted with hunger and thirst for the whole of that year. The Śrāddha will be devoid of any benefit.

19. If a base man performs or partakes of the food at a Śrāddha and goes to another village for another Śrāddha that shall be futile.

20. On being invited for Śrāddha that Brāhmaṇa should not take food (in his house). If he is deluded enough to partake of the food, he faces downfall.

21. The householder also should not have eaten anything (before the performance of Śrāddha). Those men who take food thus will certainly go to hell.

22. If after performing a Śrāddha or partaking of the food therein, one indulges in a fight, undoubtedly that Śrāddha shall be futile.

23. Hence both of them, the person who performs the Śrāddha and he who partakes of the food, should eschew these faults in particular, O king.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETEEN

Kāmya Śrāddha¹

Bharṭṛyajña said:

1-2. O king, I shall now explain *Kāmya Śrāddhas* (those performed for the realization of specific desires) to you. If they are performed, a man obtains what is cherished in the heart.

If a man wishes for a woman of beauty and decent behaviour in this world as well as in the other, the first day readily fits him.

3. That is the chief day in the Pretapakṣa pertaining to Śrāddhas.

O king, if a man wishes for an excellent virgin of good

1. This chapter gives the fruits or benefits obtained by performing Śrāddha on a particular Tithi.

conduct and comely features, O king, Śrāddha should be performed by him on the *Dvītiyā* (second) day.

4. Śrāddha should be performed on the *Tṛtīyā* (third) day by a learned man who wishes for horses having the speed similar to that of wind.

5. Śrāddha should be performed for the propitiation of the Pitṛs on the *Caturthī* day by a person who wishes for animals of great utility and wealth as well as precious and best metals.

6. O king, Śrāddha should always be performed on *Pañcamī* (fifth day) by a person who wishes for covetable sons of good conduct, the very ornaments unto the whole family.

7. Śrāddha should be performed on the *ṣaṣṭhī* (sixth) day, O king, by one who desires that his descendants should offer Śrāddha unto himself when he goes to the other world.

8. It is undoubtedly proper to perform Śrāddha on the *Saptamī* (seventh) day if one wishes for perfect agricultural produce in the seasons of summer as well as of autumn.

9. O king, it is proper to perform Śrāddha on the *Aṣṭamī* (eighth) day, if a man wishes for perfect success in mercantile activities and business dealings.

10. He who performs Śrāddha on the *Navamī* (ninth) day shall obtain herds of quadrupeds, conjugal felicity, destruction of ailments and union with those whom he loves.

11. If a devotee performs Śrāddha on the *Daśamī* day with great concentration, he will attain the desired perfection in all his activities always.

12. A man who performs Śrāddha on the *Ekādaśī* (eleventh) day gets wealth, foodgrain, favour of the king and whatever else he may have desired in his mind.

13. He who performs on the *Dvādaśī* day Śrāddha with great faith, obtains excellent sons and the desired cattle wealth.

14. If a man desires his salvation along with his Pitṛs but has no progeny, Śrāddha on the *Trayodaśī* (thirteenth) day is recommended in his case.

15. If a man desirous of (further) progeny performs Śrāddha on the *Trayodaśī* day, his family becomes extinct. *Trayodaśī* is not at all conducive to the increase of progeny.

16. In respect to Śrāddha rite, O great king, this is the ancient Śruti: "Let such a son be born in our family who may have no occasion to perform the Śrāddha on the *Trayodaśī* day."

17. During rainy season, if the constellation is Maghā and Maghā coincides with Trayodaśī, the devotee performs Śrāddha offering milk-pudding along with honey and ghee. He should worship the Pitṛs with milk pudding.

18-21. His Pitṛs do not desire the holy rite of Śrāddha that year.

Śakra who was afraid of excess of merit discarded the offering of balls of rice. He has shown fear of the death of one's son performing the Śrāddha on that day. (That means only a sonless person should perform a Śrāddha on that day).

O king, *Ekoddiṣṭa* (with only one Brāhmaṇa in view) should be performed on the *Caturdaśī* day (fourteenth) in the following cases: if the ancestors die due to weapons, have premature death, if they die due to divine calamity, person etc. if they are burnt in fire, if they are drowned in water, if they are killed by serpent, python or tiger, if they die due to being torn by horns or if they commit suicide by hanging themselves.¹

22. If that Śrāddha is performed on that day they will have satisfaction for the whole of that fortnight.

23. By performing Śrāddha on the Amāvāsyā day one obtains all those desired things which I have earlier mentioned to you all, O king. There is no doubt therein.

24. Thus I have fully narrated the benefit of Kāmya Śrāddhas to you. On hearing this a man realizes all his desires.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTY

Importance of Gajacchāyā

Ānarta said:

1-3. Why does the family become extinct if Śrāddha is performed on the *Trayodaśī* day? O great sage, tell me the reason in detail entirely.

1. In the *Ekoddiṣṭa* Śrāddha, there is no *Agnau-karaṇa* no Abhiśrāvana, no Dīpa, Dhūpa (incense), no *Svadhā* pronunciation—*Baudhāyana Sūtra* III.12.6.

The Śrāddha is meant for accidental deaths.

Bhartr̥yajña said:

O king, this Yugādi day marking (the beginning of) Kali Age is highly sacred. It has everlasting benefit in regard to holy ablution, *Dāna*, *Japa*, *Homa* and *Śrāddha*. This should be noted.

O king, if on this Tithi (i.e. *Trayodaśī*) in conjunction with Maghā constellation, the Sun is in Hasta (i.e. zodiac Virgo) it is called *Gajacchāyā*. The *Śrāddha*, then shall have everlasting benefit.

4. He who offers milk along with honey on that day with the *Pitṛs* in view and he who offers the meat of *Vādhriṇasa* (rhinoceros) are both on a par with each other.

5-6. The satisfaction derived through (the meat of) rhinoceros extends to twelve years. It drinks three times more than elderly (aged) goat that has grown feeble in its sense-organs. It is such a leader of herd that one should know a *Vādhriṇasa* (*obscure*).

Alternatively, one can offer the meat of a *Khadga* (a species of rhinoceros). They (*Pitṛs*) will have satisfaction lasting twelve years. There is no doubt. My words are not untrue.

7. Formerly, in the Rathantara Kalpa, there was an excellent king named *Sitāśva*.¹ He hailed from *Pāñcāla Deśa*. He was extremely devoted to the *Pitṛs*.

8. He used to perform *Śrāddha* on the *Tryodaśī* day with honey, *Kālaśāka* (kind of greens), the meat of a *Khadga* (rhino) and milk pudding.

9. He used to offer *Śrāddha* devoutly with the (entire) lunar race in view.

10. Once, all the *Brāhmaṇas* took their food as much as they wanted. They were urged by curiosity and they asked the king.

11. After the *Śrāddha* they found him extremely faithful and engaged in massaging their feet and bowing to them duly.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

12. O great king, after the performance of the *Śrāddha*, *Dakṣiṇā* (gift) should be offered to the *Brāhmaṇas*. Then the *Śrāddha* (the benefit thereof) reaches the *Pitṛs*.

1. The story explains the details of *Trayodaśī Śrāddha* and the curse it received from *Devas* (see vv 73-76).

13. That has been arranged by you, O king, but not given to us till now. Leave off both precious and non-precious metals and give the Dakṣiṇā to us quickly.

Bharṭṛyajña said:

14. On hearing it, the king said with a delighted mind: "I am blessed. A great favour has been shown to me by the Brāhmaṇas.

15. It is a blessing that the Brāhmaṇas request me for what they desire after partaking of the food at the Śrāddha pertaining to the Pitṛs. Hence, O highly esteemed ones, tell me what shall I offer to you all?

16. Shall I give you excellent elephants in the height of their rut, belonging to the breed called *Bhadra*? Or shall I give you very valuable horses having the speed of mind and wind?

17. Shall I give you plots of various kinds, villages and cities? I say this because I have nothing which is not worthy of being given with the Pitṛs in view."

The Brāhmaṇas said:

18. We have nothing to do with horses, gems, elephants etc. We have nothing to do with lands, big villages or anything else similar to it.

19-20. O great king, O excellent king, give us the Dakṣiṇā that destroys doubts and for the sake of which you had been requested by us and we put questions incited by our curiosity.

The king said:

21. Noble-souled Brāhmaṇas alone have the right for instructing others, O followers of the Vedas. A person of lower caste has no right either to give or to receive.

22. I am a mere king. I am not omniscient, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, so that I can impart instructions to you all who are yourselves omniscient, O wise ones.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

23. This activity of imparting instruction is based on (the relationship of) preceptor and disciple. We are only requesting for something. Do not become over-frightened

24. If you can speak out to all of us, the Brāhmaṇas, who are roused by curiosity, O king, we shall put a question.

25. Hence tell us, O highly esteemed one, if you know really and if it is not something to be kept as a great secret. We are asking you out of curiosity.

The king said:

26. If you have any doubt, O Brāhmaṇas, I shall undoubtedly reply to your question even if it is something kept as secret. So, speak out unreservedly.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

27-28. There are diverse kinds of foodstuffs. There are various types of lambatives, O king; all beverages are nectar-like. Still on this day you offer Madhu (honey, wine) that is despised and is something not worthy of being taken in by the Brāhmaṇas in particular.

29. Although there are many types of meat preparations, why do you serve the tasteless meat of rhinoceros (Khaḍga)?

30. O great king, there are vegetable dishes entirely sacred. All of them are highly tasty and can be had as side dishes.

31. Why then do you serve this kālaśāka variety of vegetable which is very pungent and which causes mouth sore? Yet you are endowed with very great devotion!

A partaker of food must not refuse anything served at the Śrāddha.

32. Nor should he (partaker of food) leave off anything as Uchīṣṭa. Hence we eat everything. So there must be a weighty reason in this matter since you insist on these. Perhaps this is conducive to Siddhi.

33-34. Hence tell us everything. We are very eager to hear why a tasteless thing that too very despicable, should be offered, O tiger among kings, as you offer it with great faith?

35. On hearing those words of those noble-souled Brāhmaṇas, the king replied shame-faced by displaying a feeble smile attended with mental chagrin.

The king said:

36. Although this is a great secret kept in our heart,

although it cannot be divulged, yet I shall speak. Listen with great concentration.

37. In an earlier birth, I was a sinful hunter, killing all sorts of creatures and eating them indiscriminately.

38-40. I used to roam about with my bow in the forest engaged in hunting. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, neither a lion, nor a tiger, neither a huge elephant nor a Śarabha remained alive once it became the target of my arrows.

Once I was roaming about on the earth, O highly esteemed ones. It was midnight and I was afflicted with hunger and thirst. I happened to come to the hermitage of Agniveśa, an excellent sage.

41. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, he was surrounded by his disciples to whom he was explaining the procedure of the rite of Śrāddha.

Agniveśa said:

42. When the Moon is in the *Pitṛya* (Maghā) constellation and the Sun is in Hasta and it is the thirteenth day, it should be known as Gajacchāyā.¹

43. When the Moon is in Maghā and the Sun is in Hasta Nakṣatra and the Tithi is Vaiśravaṇī or Trayodaśī it is Gajacchāyā.

44. When Saimhikeya (Rāhu) swallows the Moon at the Parvasandhis (i.e. Full Moon) that should be known as Gajacchāyā and one should perform Śrāddha on that day.

45. If a person performs Śrāddha then, with great devotion, even with mere water, his Pitṛs will be propitiated for twelve years.

46. When the Moon is in *Vanaspati* (i.e. during the New-Moon day) and the shadow is towards the East, that should be known as Gajacchāyā. Whatever is offered to Pitṛs then becomes everlasting in benefit.

47-48. There is no doubt therein. The Tithi pertaining to Pitṛs shall accord merit. Śrāddha should be performed then. The requisites gathered together in the morning shall

1. Gajacchāyā is explained in various ways in vv 42-44. P.V. Kane, HD, IV, 371, n, states: "Gajacchāyā is a conjunction that occurs when the Moon is in Maghā Nakṣatra and the Sun is in Hasta and the Tithi is 13 in the rainy season." Viśvarūpa on Yājñavalkya II. 218 quotes: "If the Moon is in the Pitṛya Constellation (i.e. Mahgā) and the Sun is in Kara (i.e. trunk of the elephant i.e. Hasta), if it be 13th Tithi in the rainy season, it is Gajacchāyā."

undoubtedly be conducive to the satisfaction of the Pitṛs. They may be greens, *Inguda* fruits, Bilvas, Badaras and Cīrbhaṭas.

49. Whatever the man eats, the deities too shall have the same diet.

They (disciples) said "So it is" and went to their respective abodes.

50. All the blessed disciples with Nārāyaṇa as the leader went to their abodes. Agniveśa bade the excellent Brāhmaṇas good-bye and went to sleep.

51. What was being expounded by him at night was heard by me and I resolved that I would perform Śrāddha in the morning.

52-53. 'I would kill a *Khaḍga* (rhinoceros) and bring its copious and splendid meat, then honey as well as Kālaśāka from my kinsmen. Thereby, I shall propitiate the Pitṛs.'

54-55. After deciding thus mentally I went to sleep, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. When it dawned and the bright sun rose up, I collected together honeycombs and Kālaśāka in plenty.

56. Bringing everything together I cooked everything immediately. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, after taking my bath, everything was offered devoutly to the hunters with the Pitṛs of our class in view.

57. Thus everything was offered by me with my Pitṛs in view. Nothing was offered by me to any one at any time, O Brāhmaṇas.

58. After a long time, I met with my death, O Brāhmaṇas. Thanks to the power of that Dāna, I was born in a royal family.

59-60. I had the power of remembering the previous birth, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. They, the Pitṛs, who were propitiated with the meat of Khaḍga and honey, attained great pleasure extending to twelve years. It is for this reason, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, that I perform the Śrāddha regularly.

61. I perform it through honey, Kālaśāka and the meat of Khaḍga usually. No regular procedure was observed. No Brāhmaṇas presided. Gingelly seeds and Darbha grass were not used.

62-63. Such a Śrāddha was performed by me. This has been the result thereof. Now-a-days I am performing the Śrāddha perfectly in accordance with the injunctions under the aegies of Brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas. They are honourably seated and I perform the Śrāddha with great

faith, making use of Darbha and gingelly seeds. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Mantras too are chanted.

64-65. I do not know what the benefit will be now. Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, understand this and do propitiate your Pitṛs on the *Gaja* day (i.e. *Gajacchāyā*) when the shadow of the elephant falls?

66. Thereby the Pitṛs will have satisfaction extending over twelve years. You too will have the perfect attainment of the goal as in my case now.

Bhartr̥yājña said:

67. On hearing his words, all those excellent Brāhmaṇas became pleased. They congratulated the king.

68. Ever since then, those excellent Brāhmaṇas devoutly performed the Śrāddha on the Trayodaśī day of the dark half of Nabhasya.

69. Propitiated through honey, Kālaśāka and the meat of Khadga, the Pitṛs attained great Siddhi seated on excellent aerial chariots.

70. Thanks to the power of what was offered by the descendants, the Pitṛs began to vie with the excellent Suras.

71. The Devas understood the purpose of the Śrāddhas and consulted one another, O king; the Devas viz. Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras and the Nāsatyas consulted one another.

72. They did not want the Śrāddha to be performed on that day. They thought, 'Thanks to the power thereof, we are being subjected to a clash and discomfiture with the men who resort to Śrāddha. So we shall curse them.'

73. From now onwards, if anyone performs Śrāddha on the Trayodaśī when the Thousand-rayed One (Sun) is in Virgo, his family shall become extinct.'

74-76. Thus the great Tithi was burnt (ruined) by the curse of the Devas. Ever since then this excellent Śrāddha is not being performed on this day. If anyone inadvertently performs it, his family will become extinct. So, frightened due to this, people do not perform Śrāddha on the Gajacchāyā day. Only rice-ball offering is pursued on the Gajacchāyā day.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYONE

Things Worthy of Being Offered in Śrāddha

Bhartr̥yajña said:

1. It is for this reason, O king, that no one performs that Śrāddha on that day with Pitṛs in view. They are afraid of the extinction of the family. O king, it is the truth that has been spoken by me.

2. Without performance of Śrāddha, one should give on that day to prominent Brāhmaṇas, milk-pudding along with honey and ghee to their satisfaction.

3. The meat of rhinoceros like Khadga and Vādhṛīṇasa as well as Kālaśāka should be given to Brāhmaṇas. It has been spoken by all.

4. Vādhṛīṇasa is said to be that rhinoceros which is followed by all the herds. It is feeble in all its sense-organs but drinks three times more (water) than others. It accords satisfaction to the Pitṛs always.

5. If it is not available, excellent milk and cooked rice should be given to Brāhmaṇas on that day, O king, for the satisfaction of the Pitṛs.

6. If that is not available, water mixed with gingelly seeds should be given along with Darbha grass, and a gold coin or at least a bit of gold.

7-10. The benefit that one gets by means of performing Pakṣaśrāddha (fortnightly Śrāddha) s! all be obtained, O king, by merely offering, without Śrāddha, milk pudding mixed with ghee and honey, Kālaśāka or the meat of Khadga mixed with honey. So says the traditional Śruti.

Hence, with all effort, even a poor man should give water mixed with gingelly seeds and a bit of gold if he wishes for (securing) the satisfaction of the Pitṛs. It shall be offered on the day when the constellation is that which is special to the Pitṛs (viz. Maghā) on the thirteenth day of Nabhasya when the Sun is in Hasta.

Ānarta said:

11. O Brāhmaṇa, it is mentioned in the Śāstra that meat

is despicable¹. Why is then Śrāddha offered with it? Tell me entirely.

12. A ruthless fellow who nourishes his own flesh by means of the flesh of others shall certainly fall in hell. This has been said by the great sages.

13. But, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, you praise its efficacy especially in the Śrāddha rite. Hence this doubt of mine.

Bhartr̥yajña said:

14. It is true, O highly esteemed one, that meat is despised by good men. Yet why is it employed in the Śrāddha rite? I shall tell you.

15. When the act of creation was started by Brahmā, the creator of the worlds, after duly adoring the Pitṛs and Devas beginning with Nāndīmukhas, Khadga and Vādhriṇasa were born.

16. Thereupon, the Pitṛs of divine origin as well as of human origin, caught hold of them as though they constituted their oblation.

17. Then Brahmā spoke to them: "O Pitṛs, these two have been created by me for your sake. They are the excellent oblation. Let them be accepted.

18-19. Through these two, you will have great delight at my instance. But by killing them for your sake no man on earth shall incur sin. Hence one who wishes for prosperity, shall offer these with all effort.

20. The meat obtained from Khadga and Vādhriṇasa accords excellent satisfaction in Śrāddha rite. These two also are extremely divine (in quality) and will go over to the heavenly world.

21. A person who offers the Śrāddha will have great welfare that is usually very rare. The Pitṛs too will have endless satisfaction extending to twelve years."

According to *Bṛhatparāśara Smṛti* the following five are to be eschewed in Kali Age: procreation of a child from husband's brother (if the husband is dead and is childless), killing of a beast (viz cow or calf), Madhuparka for the reception of a guest, serving of meat in Śrāddha, and entrance into Vānaprastha stage of life.
(For more discussion See HD V. 1267-1272).

22. For this reason, O king, the meat of these two is esteemed well on that day. Its use on other occasions is not prescribed.

Rohitāśva said:

23. O Brāhmaṇa, if one does not get the meat of either Khaḍga or Vādhriṇasa, how should he perform Śrāddha which will cause satisfaction to the Pitṛs?

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

24. Milk pudding should be given along with honey for the satisfaction of Pitṛs. Thereby Pitṛs get satisfaction lasting for a year.

25. The meat of goat and that got from Śiśumāra (alligator) is said to accord satisfaction for a year less by one month (i.e. for eleven months), O king.

26. In the circumstance of its non-availability the meat of a boar is to be offered, which is said as according satisfaction to Pitṛs for ten months. There is no doubt about it.

27. There shall be satisfaction for nine months from the meat of wild buffalo; the meat of Ruru deer accords eight month's satisfaction and that of Eṇa (deer) seven month's satisfaction.

28. Śambara deer accords six month's satisfaction; rabbit, five months; Śallaka (porcupine) four months and Taittira bird three months.

29. The meat of fish accords satisfaction for two months and that of Kapiṇjala bird for one month; the meat of other animals or birds should not be used at all in the rites of Pitṛs.

30. O excellent king, the meat of only these beings is holy and pure.

Ānarta said:

31. Why are these living beings considered holy? Why has the meat of these beings been recommended in Śrāddha rite? Tell me this truthfully, O excellent Brāhmaṇa.

Bharṭṛyajña said:

32. After Khaḍga, Vādhriṇasa etc., animals were created

by the Self-born Lord, the creator of the worlds, in the course of creation.

33. They are of eleven sizes, O excellent king. Then the other things were created. It was goat that was created at the outset and it was considered sacred (worth sacrificing).

34. Similarly all those created at the outset were sacred. Gingly seeds were created by him when he started creation of the vegetable kingdom.

35-36. For the purpose of Śrāddha, *Vṛ̥his* (grain) were created. Among wild grains *Priyaṅgu* was created. I shall mention them in order: Wheat, barley, pulses, green gram, Nivāra and Śyāmāka were created thus. But they desire and feel satisfied with meat. The meat should not be mixed with other meat (i.e. it should not be that of carnivorous animals).

37. When creation of the flowering species was started, Śatapatrikā was created by him. It is very important in Śrāddha rite always.

38. While creating minerals silver was created by the Self-born Lord. Therefore, it is recommended as Dakṣiṇā in Śrāddha for the (Pitr̥'s) satisfaction.

39. Whatever is given to the Brāhmaṇas in silver vessels, is of everlasting benefit to Pitr̥s. It lasts till the end of the Yuga.

40. If silver vessels are not available, a performer of Śrāddha should mention them by name, since, O king, the Pitr̥s are pleased by their glorification.

41. While creating juices (liquids), honey was created by the Self-born Lord. Therefore it is recommended in Śrāddha rite. It accords satisfaction to Pitr̥s.

42. If a Śrāddha is bereft of honey, it cannot be conducive to the satisfaction of Pitr̥s even if all other juices and sweet dishes are present.

43. If even a very little quantity of honey is not available, a householder should announce it by name because then it provides satisfaction to Pitr̥s.

44. While creating greens and vegetables Kālaśāka was created at the outset by Brahmā, the Parameṣṭhin. Hence it gives satisfaction.

45. While creating Kāla (Time, auspicious hours) *Kutaṇḍa* (eighth Muhūrta of the day i.e. around midday) was created

by him at the outset. Hence Śrāddha should be performed then by a sensible one who wishes for the permanent satisfaction of the Pitṛs and his own happiness.

46. While creating creepers, O excellent king, Darbhā was first created by Vidhi. Hence, it is remembered as worthy of the Śrāddha rites.

47. While creating Brāhmaṇas eligible for Śrāddha rites, sons of daughters were created at the outset by the Lotus-born Lord. Therefore, they are remembered as worthy of the Śrāddha rites.

48. A son of daughter even if he be devoid of purity and cleanliness, even if he be deficient in limbs or has surplus, still one should include him (son of daughter) in the Śrāddha rite for pleasing the Pitṛs.

49. While creating animals (cattle), cows were created by him first. Therefore, their milk is recommended in Śrāddha rite and Ghee from them is specially recommended.

50. Hence ghee is praised in the course of Śrāddha rite. If it is offered, it is contributory to the satisfaction of Pitṛs.

51. While creating mankind excellent Brāhmaṇas were created by him at the outset. Hence they are always esteemed in Śrāddha rite. They cause delight and satisfaction unto the Pitṛs.

52. While creating Devas, the Viśvedevas were created at the outset by him. Hence when Śrāddha rites are performed, they are to be worshipped at the outset.

53. Worshipped at the outset in Śrāddha they protect the entire Śrāddha rite. They destroy all vulnerable loopholes.

54. After creating these important ones at the beginning, Śrāddha was created by Pitāmaha himself. Then Devas were created.

55-58. Therefore, O excellent king, they became well-known in all the worlds. Thus the entire details of Śrāddha rite have been described to you. It is a great esoteric secret of the Pitṛs. If performed, it has endless benefit. If one recites this (discourse), O excellent king, when a Śrāddha is being performed, when the Brāhmaṇas are about to partake of their food, that Śrāddha has everlasting benefit. O king, he who listens to this with perfect faith shall obtain that benefit which is attained when Śrāddha is performed.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Decision Regarding Caturdaśī Śrāddha

Bharṭṛyañā said:

1-3. O king, Śrāddha should be performed on the Caturdaśī (fourteenth) day in the case of those who meet with their death in the following manner: premature death, killed by weapons, supernatural calamities, being poisoned, burnt by fire, drowned in water, bitten by serpents, or mauled by tigers, bruised by horns and hanging from trees etc. When Śrāddha is performed they will have satisfaction extending over a fortnight.

Ānarta said:

4. How is it that the Tithi Caturdaśī is recommended for offering Śrāddha unto those killed by weapons and not for others? This is my doubt. Kindly explain.

5. They do not approve of Ekoddiṣṭa.¹ Why should Sapiṇḍikaraṇa (offering rice-balls in ritualistic manner) be carried out? Do tell me this in detail.

6. Why is the Pārvaṇa Śrāddha not performed on that day in the Pretapakṣa when all (other) Śrāddhas are performed?

Bharṭṛyañā said:

7. There was a great Asura formerly in Bṛhatkalpa. He was brave and powerful. He caused great terror among all the Devas.

8. Brahmā was propitiated by him through the performance of various kinds of penance especially during the dark half in the month of Nabhasya (Bhādrapada).

Brahmā said:

9. O dear one, I am pleased with you. Do request for whatever is desired by you. I shall grant it even if it happens

1. *Ekoddiṣṭa Śrāddha*, as the name indicates, is offered to one person only while in Pārvaṇa Śrāddha three paternal ancestors are invited. This is meant for accidental, unnatural deaths as mentioned in vv 1-3.

to be what should not be given. Hence do request. Do not tarry.

Hiraṇyākṣa said:

10. O Lotus-born One, the hungry Bhūtas, Pretas, Piśācas, Rākṣasas, Daityas and Dānavas are very hungry always and they beg from me.

11. If at least on one day Śrāddha is performed in the Pretapakṣa when the Sun is in Virgo, there will generally be the satisfaction lasting for a year.

12. Hence, O Lotus-born One, give one day unto them whereby, O Pitāmaha, they will stay satisfied for a year.

Śrī Brahmā said:

13-14. If any man offers Śrāddha to his Piṭṛs on the Caturdāśī (fourteenth) day in the Pretapakṣa, the month being Nabhasya (Bhādrapada), that shall go to Pretas, Rākṣasas, Bhūtas and others mentioned by you. Undoubtedly here is my word for it.

15. In the case of those who die an unnatural and inglorious death and those who are killed in battles, they will have satisfaction if Ekoddiṣṭa is offered by the sons.

16. After saying thus, Brahmā vanished. Hiraṇyākṣa was delighted and he went to his own abode.

17. I shall tell you the reason why Ekoddiṣṭa Śrāddha is offered on that day by men to those who are killed with weapons.

18. Those men who had been fighting with a determined and unhesitating mind but were killed in the battle by means of weapons, are not reborn in the mortal world again.

19. Those men who turn away their faces and take to flight from the battlefield and are then killed become Pretas. Pitāmaha said this.

20-21. Manu, the son of the Self-born Lord, said: "Sometimes even the minds of heroic persons may waver and some people may fight face to face but on being assailed make piteous outbursts. On being smashed to pieces they may express regrets too. They too become Pretas.

22. Thanks to their mental confusion (it becomes necessary) that Śrāddha should be performed for them by their sons on that day. Then there are embodied ones dying premature and unnatural deaths.

23. Those people become Pretas. Hence, O excellent king, they are to be offered Śrāddha and that day (the 14th day) has been stipulated as befitting the Śrāddha.

24. On that day Ekoddiṣṭa should be performed after Sapiṇḍīkaraṇa. I shall mention the reason thereof.

25. If, by chance, the father attains the state of Preta, O king, Śrāddha, should be performed for his propitiation.

26. Pitāmahas (grandfathers) and others do not deserve Śrāddha on that day. If inadvertently the Śrāddha is performed, it is appropriated by Rākṣasas.

27. At the instance of Brahmā, O king, Bhūtas, Pretas and Dānavas too appropriate the same. Hence only Ekoddiṣṭa is to be performed and not Pārvaṇa (Śrāddha).

28-30. The above is in the case of Caturdaśī in the Piṭṛpakṣa, when the Sun is in Virgo. Grandfather does not accept it along with the father, nor his father as well as great-grandfather, O king. For this reason, O king, Pārvaṇa Śrāddha is not performed on that day because that Śrāddha shall be futile.

31. A Nāgara should perform Śrāddha rites and Vratas through Nāgara Brāhmaṇas and not through Brāhmaṇas hailing from other places. Otherwise that will be futile.

32. The Śrāddha of Nāgaras which is performed through Brāhmaṇas hailing from other places though they may be experts therein (becomes futile).

33. Even if they do not have good conduct, even if they are fallen, Nāgaras are entitled for Śrāddha. A kinsman may be on a par with bull. If such a kinsman is obtained, of what avail are the many Brāhmaṇas who may have mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas."

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Kinds of Sons Eligible to Offer Śrāddha¹

Bhartr̥yāṇa said:

1-2. On *Darśa* (New-Moon) day Pārvaṇa Śrāddha should be performed through Brāhmaṇas (eligible to perform Śrāddha). No Śrāddha should be performed otherwise.

If a man performs a Śrāddha through Brāhmaṇas such as *Jāraja* (born of a paramour), *Apaviddha* (rejected or forsaken son) etc. that Śrāddha becomes ineffective. There is no doubt about it.

Ānarta said:

3. A great fear has caught hold of me, in view of what has been said here, viz. that a Śrāddha offered through *Jārajātas* and *Apaviddhas* becomes futile.

4. O highly intelligent one, Manu has mentioned twelve types of sons who always fulfill the needs of those who have no sons.

Kinds of sons

5. They (kinds of sons) are, O excellent one: Aurasa (a bosom-born legitimate son), *Kṣetrāja* (born of one's own wife from others), *Krayakṛita* (bought in a sale) *Pālita* (one who has been brought up), *Pratipanna* (accepted, adopted), *Sahodha* (son conceived even at the time of marriage) and *Kānina* (son born of an unmarried girl).

6. Kuṇḍas and Golas are also mentioned as sons (born of adultery when husband is alive or after his death).

7. A disciple, one who is saved from death and *Aśvattha* tree at the outskirts of the forest: why have these not been mentioned when you say like this?

Bhartr̥yāṇa said:

8. O highly-esteemed one, it is true that all these are legally recognised as sons. But that is only in the other Yugas.

1. What type of son is eligible to perform Śrāddha *vide* HD IV. pp. 536-
37. This Purāṇa gives a brief treatment about eligibility.

In Kali Age, they are not dispeller of sins.

9. For that purpose there is this consideration only to that extent in every Yuga in regard to the people equipped with inherent strength but not so in Kali where the people are deficient in intellect.

10. Only in Kali, is such type of dealing mentioned as causing downfall. Since the people are of insufficient strength, this procedure has been laid down.

11. In this matter listen to the result if one causes *Sanhara* (mixture of castes) in sexual union. A son born to a Brāhmaṇa lady through adultery with a Brāhmaṇa becomes a Brāhmaṇa-slayer.

12. He is the basest of all base people and is remembered as Vāraḍa.

13. A son born of a Kṣatriya (to a Brāhmaṇa lady) is Sūta and that born of a Vaiśya is Māgadha, but one born of a Śūdra is said to be *Antyaja*. Therefore, these sons are rejected.

14. Among these (twelve), O king, seven are pointed out as good sons and the (latter) five cause destruction to the family and downfall to the ancestors.

15. They are : Aurasa, Pratipanna, Krīta, Pālita, Śiṣya, Dattajīva (one who was saved) and Āsvattha the seventh.

16. They save the ancestor from falling into the hell named *Put*. Hence they are remembered as excellent.

17. Kṣetrāja, Sahodha, Kānīna, Kuṇḍa and Golaka: these five cause the downfall of the Pitṛs even if they had gone to heaven.

18. For this reason the Śrāddha offered by a Jārajāta is invalid.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Procedure of Śrāddha

Ānarta said:

1-2. O highly esteemed one, I have now heard who those Brāhmaṇas are who are fit for performing Śrāddha and who are to be rejected. I have also heard about the many kinds of sons, O sage of excellent vows.

Now tell us the procedure to be followed always by a householder in order to propitiate the Pitṛs. Describe this along with the Mantras.

Bharṭṛyajña said:

3. The excellent Brāhmaṇas who are invited for performing a Śrāddha after due obeisance, should be brought (home) at the time of Kutapa. The householder then requests them all thus:

4. "May the highly esteemed and very powerful Viśvedevas be pleased to come in." Let them give due attention to their respective duties which they have been assigned.

5. After adoring them all thus, he should circumambulate them and placing the knees on the ground he should offer the *Arghya*.

6. O eminent king, this *Arghya* along with flowers, rice-grains and sandalpaste is to be offered with the following Mantra: "May excellent Brāhmaṇas accept this *Arghya* offered by me for the purpose of washing the feet. Let them do what is pleasing to me."

7. After uttering this, he should strew raw rice grains and Darbha grass on the ground which is well cleaned and smeared duly. He should then glorify Viśvedevas.

8. Wearing the sacred thread anticlockwise, he should strew twice the number of Darbhas and gingelly seeds on the ground with his own Pitṛs in view.

9. In this manner all the rites of the deities should be performed with the sacred thread worn clockwise (from left shoulder to the right) and all the rites pertaining to the Pitṛs except the Nādimukha Pitṛs, with it worn anticlockwise (from right shoulder to the left).

10. O king, within one's capacity all the pairs of Pitṛs should be placed *Pūrvamukhas* (with faces turned to the east). The Pitṛs of the mother's side should be placed *Udamukhas* (with faces turned to the north).

11. Each of them can be placed severally or all in a circle for the satisfaction of the Pitṛs.

12. Using the genitive case, Āsanas (seats) should be offered to them. The *Āsana* is to consist of straight Darbha grass

mixed with rice-grain and water. The seats should be to the right side.

13. To the left side, twice the number of the Darbhas of unequal lengths should be offered along with gingelly seeds. They should be offered after sprinkling water on the hand (palms) with Darbha grasses. They are not to be handed over at all(?).

14. If an ignorant person offers seat with the Darbha grass in the hand, the Pitṛs do not accept the seat.

15. The Āvāhana (invocation) rite should be performed with the use of the accusative case (e.g. *amukam āvāhayāmi*). They should be severally invoked and all of them arrive accordingly.

16. The highly esteemed Pitṛs never come if the devotee invokes them with the use of any other case-ending (e.g. *amukāya āvāhayāmi*) even if they are hungry.

17. O king, with the Mantra beginning with *visvedevāsa āgatā* their invocation should be made with raw rice-grains near the head.

18. Then one should invoke the Pitṛs dropping gingelly seeds and uttering the Mantra *uśantastva* etc. Thereafter, O excellent king, he should utter the Mantra *āyantu naḥ* etc.

19. He shall pour water in the *Arghyapātras* of the Pitṛs uttering the mantra "*Śanno devi*" etc. along with the word "svāhā".

20. He should drop rice-grains there, uttering the Mantra *yavosi yavayāsmadva* etc. He should then duly offer sandalpaste, sweet scents, flowers and incense. With great concentration he shall offer *Arghya* unto the hands adorned with *Pavitras*. (Rings of Darbha grass).

21. Similarly he should pour water into the *Arghya* vessels of the Pitṛs uttering the Mantra *yā divyā* etc. along with *Svāhākāra*.

22. He shall scatter Tila (gingelly seeds) uttering the Mantra beginning with *tilosi* meaning 'You are gingelly seeds' with Soma as the presiding deity. 'You have been created by the Lord during Gosava sacrifice. You have been mixed with Svadhā by the traditionalists. Delight these Pitṛs, worlds and all of us; Svadhā unto you.'

23-24. Then the *Arghya* is to be offered by uttering the

Mantra *yādīvyā*. The devotee then takes all the *Arghya* Pātras in the *Pitrpātra* and places that *Pātra* with face down uttering the said Mantra. If the devotee desires longevity, he should not look at it with his eyes.

25. Then he should offer everything beginning with *Candana* (sandalpaste) and ending with *Dīpa* (light). Then he holds the cooked food and asks the excellent Brāhmaṇas:

26. "I shall consign to the (sacred) fire the Homa pertaining to the Pitṛs. Oh! May the permission be given to me who have resorted to *Āpasavya* (i.e. the sacred thread worn from the right shoulder to the left).

27. When they say "Do so", the performer of the Śrāddha goes to the fire-sanctuary and performs the first *Āhuti* uttering "Svāhā unto the Agni, the transporter of the Kavya."

28. Thereafter, he utters "Svadhā unto Soma comprising the Pitṛs." The cooked rice is consigned to the fire and the remainder is offered to those who deserve Śrāddha.

29. The thumb of the Brāhmaṇa is held and placed in the centre of the food cooked. After serving the desired food, the devotee utters, holding the vessel:

30. "Pṛthivī (the Earth) is thy utensil." Then the Vaisṇavi Ṛk is recited. Salt should not be handed over to him directly with own hand.

31. If salt is given directly, with the hand, O king, that Śrāddha becomes futile. When half of the food is consumed, ghee is offered (again). After knowing (making it sure) that the Brāhmaṇas are satisfied the devotee (performer of Śrāddha) should serve cooked rice, and serve the food in front.

32. (The Mantra is uttered) "Those souls in my family who have been cremated in fire or who have not been so cremated should be satisfied with this food offered on the ground. Let them attain the greatest goal."

33. After offering water at intervals, the devotee repeats the Gāyatrī Mantra three times. Then he recites the passage beginning with *madhu vātā* and asks the excellent Brāhmaṇas:

34. "Are you fully satisfied?" O eminent king, he should then with great devotion request them for permission to give the remaining food to the kinsmen.

35. Afterwards, the altar of the Pitṛs is made by the side of the Ucchiṣṭa (leavings of food). In the case of the Brāhmaṇas

seated in the place of the Pitṛs there is no Ucchiṣṭa as near the Brāhmaṇas.

36. After arranging the altar pertaining to the Pitṛs sloping to the south, the devotee scatters Darbha grass over it. He shall then sprinkle water over them ritualistically.

37. Thereafter, he should offer the rice-balls in due order with due utterance of the case endings as before. He should then offer water with Pitṛ-Tirtha, O king. Among those rice-balls he should offer sacred thread for each of the Piṇḍas.

38. If the devotee offers only a single sacred thread covering all the Piṇḍas, he will be acting against them. The snapping of the thread may cause mutual discord.

39. Then, he should adore all the rice-balls as though they were the excellent Brāhmaṇas themselves. Then, O king, he performs *Ācamana* and washes his own hands and feet.

40. The Pitṛs are then bowed to. Water is sprinkled. This is called *Suprokṣita* (well-sprinkled). This is done with the sacred thread in the *savya* position, O leading king. He should then request for excellent blessings.

41. Then *Akṣayya sahita* (water conducive to everlasting benefit) is offered uttering the genitive case ending. The *Pavitrās* are held up and he utters "*Svadhā*". When they say "Let there be *Svadhā*", he shall drop them on the Piṇḍas.

42. Then he collects together honey, milk-pudding and water mixed with gingelly seeds. Then he utters the Mantra *ūrjasva* etc. and drops them on the Pitṛs.

43. The Arghya utensil is held erect and the monetary gift is placed therein—gold in the case of the deities and silver in the case of Pitṛs.

44-45. Then with the sacred thread in the *savya* position the water conducive to welfare (*Svastyudaka*) is offered to the Pitṛs. The utensil of the Brāhmaṇas who were fed at the Śrāddha should not be taken away by women, boys or any one else. The devotee (performer of the Śrāddha) himself removes it.

46-49. Then, O excellent king, the devotee stands with palms joined in reverence: "May the Pitṛs be devoid of ferocious qualities. May our family flourish. May those who give us prosper. May the Vedas prosper. May our progeny prosper.

Let not our faith disappear. Let us have much to spare. Let cooked rice be abundant. Let us get guests. We may have persons requesting us for things. Let there not be an occasion when we shall have to request others for anything. Let these be the blessings. May the Viśvedevas be pleased."

Water is to be offered for the sake of *Svasti* (welfare) with the sacred thread in *Savya* position.

50. Uttering the Rk Mantra *vāje vāje*, the Brāhmaṇas are to be bidden farewell. They are to be seated and circumambulated uttering the Mantra *amā vājasya* etc.

51-52. The feet should be massaged and the Brāhmaṇas are to be followed till the boundary line of the village. The oblation is deposited (in a pond), then the devotee takes food silently, O king, as long as the Sun is visible.

53. If a man performing Śrāddha takes food after the Sun has set, that Śrāddha becomes useless. Hence he should not take food at night.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

Procedure of Sapiṇḍikaraṇa

Ānarta said:

1. O most excellent one among the eloquents, do tell me the procedure for the Ekoddiṣṭa in detail. O highly intelligent one, narrate it to me just as you have described in detail the procedure of the *Pārvaṇa Śrāddha*.

Bharṭṛyaṇa said:

2-3. There are three (Śrāddhas) before *Saṅcayana* (collection of bones and remains of cremation). Listen to them now. Śrāddha should be performed at the spot where death takes place. Then Ekoddiṣṭa at the place where the rest was given (made) on the way. Then the third Śrāddha is recommended at the place where *Saṅcayana* (collection of bones and ashes) is made.

4. Then the Śrāddhas are performed on the first, second,

fifth, seventh, ninth and tenth days. Thus there are nine Śrāddhas.

5-6. (In view of these) at the time of meeting with Vaitaraṇi, the departed one should become satisfied. The Ekoddiṣṭa is without any deity. Only one *Arghya* and one *Pavitra*. There is no *Āvāhana*, O excellent king, it should be extended thus. Similarly, the question about satisfaction should be made as *Svādita* (the utterance of 'May it be well tested and relished') once.

7. The *Brāhmaṇa* is taken leave of with the Mantra *abhiramyatām* etc. Two leaves of *Darbha* should be taken together. The end of the grass should not be cut or split or separated. This should be known as *Pavitra* and it is prescribed in *Ekoddiṣṭa*.

8. Everywhere the word *Pitaḥ* (O father) should be uttered; the word *Pitā* during the rite of *Tarpana* (libation); the word *Pitre* at the time of the *San̄kalpa* (utterance of the resolve); the word *Pituh* at the time when everlasting benefit is being caused to be given (*Akṣayya Dāpana*).

9. The word *Gotra* ends with *Svara* everywhere. The word is *Gotre* at the time of the *Tarpana* rite. At the time of *Kalpana* (*san̄kalpa*) the word is *Gotrāya* and at the time of *Akṣayya Dāpana* it is *Gotrasya*.

10. The word *Śarman* is uttered in *Arghya* and other activities. The word *Śarmā* in the *Tarpana* rite; the word *Śarmane* when the *Sasya* (vegetable dish) is offered and *Śarmanah* at the time of *Akṣayyaka Vidhi*.

11. The words *Mātaḥ*, *Mātre* and *Mātuḥ* are uttered respectively when the seat is offered, when *San̄kalpa* is made and when *Akṣayya* is offered. The words *Gotre*, *Gotrāyai* and *Gotrāyāḥ* are also uttered as well as the nominative and other case endings.

12. The words *Devī*, *Devyai* and *Devyāḥ* are pronounced unto the mother. Thus there *Prathamā* (actually vocative case), *Caturthī* and *Ṣaṣṭhī* should be used to make the Śrāddha fulfilled.

13. If the Śrāddha is performed without the used *Vibhaktis* (case endings) or contrarily, one should know that it is no better than not performed. It does not reach the *Pitr̥s*.

14. Hence the rites should always be performed in the

Śrāddha scrupulously along with the case-endings as mentioned now, by a wise Brāhmaṇa.

15. Then after a year, the *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa*¹ rite is to be performed. If any auspicious ceremony ensues thereafter this rite can be performed even before this stipulated period (of one year).

16. O king, Ekoddiṣṭa should be performed in accordance with the injunctions laid down in the Pārvaṇa texts. It is performed with the departed one in view. It may have the three deities or no deities.

17-20. The dish cooked is single. This is my opinion.

The devotee takes up the Arghya utensil intended for the departed one and pours the contents in the three *Pitrpātras* in three equal quantities.

Similarly, the *Pinḍa* is split into three and put along with the three *Pitrpinḍas* uttering the two Mantras *ye samānā* etc. He will no longer remain a Preta thereafter.

The *Avanejana* rite (sprinkling of water on the Darbha grass) is performed then in due order beginning with the father.

The sweet scents, incense etc. shall be offered once again. The names are uttered beginning with the father and the fourth (ancestor) is dropped.

21. Some people offer the rite unto the fourth (ancestor) and then to the departed soul of one's own father. The Śrāddha of the father shall be at the outset. But this is not approved by me.

22. Except in the case of *Kṣayāha* (New-Moon day) and *Caturdaśī* of those who are killed with weapons, one should not perform Ekoddiṣṭa after the *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa* rite.

23. If the son (or descendant) joins with a separate rice-ball, the Preta to whom *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa* has already been performed, one should know that it is almost not performed. The son then becomes the slayer of the Pitṛs.

24. In the case of one whose father has passed away but the grandfather is alive, he shall after uttering the name of his father utter the name of the great-grandfather.

25. The grandfather shall take food directly and accept the

1. For details of *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa* see HD IV, pp. 520-525. Here the treatment is quite sketchy.

Piṇḍaka. *Pārvaṇa Śrāddha* is recommended on the *Pitāmaha Kṣayāha* (day on which the grandfather passed away).

26. The *Śrāddha* is not offered to him at all discarding one's own father. If his *Śrāddha* is not performed there is no bit of fear from the *Pitṛs* (or from one's father).

27. If the father is dead, *Pārvaṇa* is performed in all the *Amāvāsya*s. In the middle of the latter half of *Nabhasya* too this is mentioned.

28. One should not perform *Śrāddha* unless *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa* is performed.

29. At the advent of *Śrāddhapakṣa* if the father passes away the *Śrāddha* of grandfather etc. is to be performed and there is no *Sapiṇḍikaraṇa*.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYSIX

Tortures in Twentyone Hells

Bhartr̥yājña said:

1-2. Since *Sapiṇḍatā* is cited as (performed) all round the *Pitṛpiṇḍas*, the departed soul remains behind unless and until the *Sapiṇḍa* rite is performed even if the departed one might have been equipped with all virtues and power of penance. It is for this reason that the sages have prescribed *Sapiṇḍa* rites.

3. The man may attain next births anywhere. Yet he gets what is offered by the members of his family even as he stays therein and becomes satisfied.

Ānarta said:

4. After a long time, the ancestors—father, grandfathers, are seen in dream. They request for the fulfilment of their desires. O great sage, what shall happen then?

Bhartr̥yājña said:

5. Those who have not attained emancipation, those who

continue to remain in the state of Preta, reveal themselves (in dreams).

6. Only they reveal themselves to their descendants, not to others. It is the truth that has been spoken by me. (They mention) how they were born in this world and how they incurred the same by means of auspicious and inauspicious activities.

Ānarta said:

7. If one has no son, how can one get the *Sap̄ṇḍikaraṇa* rite performed? It behoves you to explain this to me.

Bharṭṛyajña said:

8-9. O king, if one has no bosom-born son, how can one become the fourth person among the four Pitṛs. *Preta* (Pra+ita) is so called because it goes (*eti*) With intensity (*Prakarṣa*). *Sap̄ṇḍikaraṇa* should be performed for him by the son of his brother or by his wife.

10-12. If the fourth one is not at all born, O eminent king, they must have the representatives of the son such as the eleven types of sons like Kṣetraja etc. as mentioned before.

Learned men say that in that case, there will not be loss of rite. O great king, if the subsequent rites are not performed at the proper times, *Nārāyaṇabali* should be offered and it dispels the state of being Preta.

The rites in the case of those who commit suicide or meet with their death from a Brāhmaṇa, are to be performed as in the case of men who meet with premature death.

Ānarta said:

13-14. O highly intelligent one, how does a person meet with death here? How does he go to heaven or hell? By means of which type of activity? O highly esteemed one, how does a person attain salvation? Narrate everything in detail.

Bharṭṛyajña said:

15. The goals are of three types: (1) that of the meritorious, (2) that of a sinner and (3) that of a possessor of

spiritual knowledge. Svarga (Heaven) is attained through merit (*Dharma*) and Naraka (Hell) alone is obtained through sin.

16-17. Salvation is obtained through spiritual wisdom. It is the truth that has been averred by me. O king, Yudhiṣṭhira, the excellent king, the son to Dharma, asked Bhīṣma, the son of Śantanu, this very question about the future. O leading king, at that time Kṛṣṇa was with him.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

18. O Pitāmaha, how many Narakas are well-known in the world of Yama? Through what sort of sin do all the creatures go to them?

Śrī Bhīṣma said:

19. The Narakas in the abode of Yama are twentyone in number. Creatures go there in accordance with their Karmas.

20. Two Kāyasthas (scribes) in the abode of Yama are well known as Citra and Vicitra.

21. Citra records in writing the entire virtuous acts of a living being. Vicitra exerts himself and writes in full all the sins with great care.

22. The messengers of Yama born of Dharmarāja, are eight in number. They all take men under their control (to Yama's place) from the mortal world.

23. They are Karāla, Vikarāla, Vakranāsa, Mahodara, Saumya, Śānta, Nanda and the eighth one Suvākya.

24. Among these the first four are terrible in form. All of them take sinning people to the abode of Yama.

25. The latter four are gentle in form and features. All of them take virtuous people to the abode of Yama.

26. Those virtuous people ride in aerial chariots. They are attended upon by groups of Apsarās (celestial damsels).

27. The people are taken in accordance with the written report about their sinful and virtuous acts. There is no limit to the servants of these people.

28. Of those servants, one hundred eight are the ailments set up to assist himself by Yama. They are the ailments beginning with fever and ending with Yakṣman (tuberculosis).

29. Those ailments go at the outset and bring a man under their control.

30-31. Then the messengers of Yama go there unobserved by all the people and seize the aerial form lying embedded at the root of the navel. They leave off the physical body on the ground and go along the *Yamamārga* (the pathway to Yama) which is proclaimed to be eightysix thousand Yojanas in length.

32. There is a river named Vaitaraṇī there. We have heard about it before, O highly esteemed one, that it has two perpetual streams there.

33. In one of the streams it is blood that flows. O great scion of the family of Bharata, there are very sharp weapons in its centre.

34. Those who make the gift of a cow to a Brāhmaṇa at the time of death, O king, cross that river by holding on to its tail.

35. Others cross the hundred Yojanas of width by means of their own arms. The second stream of that Vaitaraṇī consists of water always available unto the righteous.

36. Those men who give cows at the time of death hold on to the tail of the cow and cross the current of profuse quantity of water. Others who had not made gifts of cows cross it by means of their arms.

37. Hence the gift of cows should be made at the time of death by those people who wish good goal for themselves.

38. After that (after crossing Vaitaraṇī) sinners go along the *Pāpamārga* (path of sin). The virtuous ride on excellent aerial chariots and go along the *Dharmamārga* (path of virtue).

39. On the other side of Vaitaraṇī, there is a great forest named *Asipatravana*, five Yojanas in extent. It accords misery unto sinful people.

40. There are hundreds of *Asipatras* (sword-like leaves) made of steel in it and these cut the bodies of the men around.

41. If wicked persons had taken away the wealth of others and kidnapped other men's wives, their bodies will be split by those leaves. If the nine Śrāddhas are performed on their behalf they will be liberated from them.

42. It should be known that beyond it is the well-known Naraka named *Kūṭaśālmali*. It is full of thorns and (the sinners) are suspended (therein) with face down.

43. Those who are always ruthless and are guilty of breach of trust, get scorched day and night by the fire beneath them. If Śrāddha on the eleventh day is performed they get liberated therefrom.

44. Beyond it, it is said, is a Naraka of horrible nature named Yantra. Brāhmaṇa-slayers and other sinful persons are tortured there.

45. O king, if the twelfth-day Śrāddha is offered they get liberated completely from the Naraka called Yantra.

46. Beyond it are well-established the furiously burning pillars. Those who had been enamoured of other men's wives (are made to) embrace them all.

47. If the Māsika Śrāddha (monthly Śrāddha) is performed, they will attain liberation.

48. Beyond it stand the hideous dogs with steel-like canine teeth. These dogs bite those sinners, the men who had been biting the fleshy portion of the back (i.e. slanderers and backbiters). If *Traipakṣika* (performed once in three fortnights) Śrāddha is performed, they will get relief from them.

49-50. Beyond it are to be found crows with beaks of steel. They peck at the eyes of those by whom other men's wives had been viewed with passionate eyes. While here they do have fresh eyes in plenty. If the Śrāddha is performed once in two months, they will have relief from this.

51. Beyond that is Śālmalikūṭa (certain trees with thorn-like protuberance and iron-like thorns). Men engaged in calumny are taken through them and tortured. If the Śrāddha is performed once in three months they will have relief.

52. Then there is the very well-known great Naraka named Raurava. It has been specially intended for according acute torture to slayers of Brāhmaṇas.

53. Those who are cast into it are repeatedly cut and torn with various kinds of weapons. Their salvation can be effected through the Śrāddha performed once in four months.

54. Another extremely horrible hell is named Kṣāroda. It is always pain-giving and is particularly intended for ungrateful persons.

55. They are suspended with feet up and faces down when they are tortured. Their emancipation can take place by offering Śrāddha once in five months.

56. It should be known that the Naraka named Kumbhīpāka of extremely hideous features, is beyond that. Persons who have killed children and were guilty of genocide are hurled into (hot) oil and struck with stout sticks there.

57. Persons who betray trust fall into this horrible Naraka. They are liberated from that ordeal by offering Śrāddha once in six months.

58. Similarly there is another Naraka about which it is heard that it has serpents and scorpions. Those base men who are hypocrites in the world go there. Their salvation lies in offering Śrāddha once in seven months.

59-60. There is another Naraka named Samvartaka. Persons of wicked souls who censure good men and insult the Vedas (are cast into it). With fiery tongs and pincers their tongues are plucked. The body of those who utter lie to achieve their ends is bitten by dogs.

61. The bodies of even those who speak lies for the sake of others (are also bitten by the dogs). Their salvation becomes effective by offering Śrāddha once in eight months.

62. There is a great hideous hell causing great ruin, named Agnikūṭa. Those foolish men who are guilty of perjury go there.

63. Those who lie there are miserable. They have to endure terrible torture. The offer of Śrāddha once in nine months causes great delight to them.

64-65. There is another hell around, full of steel and iron spikes. Persons guilty of arson and murder of women go there. On being hit and struck by the Servants (of Yama) they run about in great sorrow. The offer of Śrāddha once in ten months is conducive to their liberation.

66. Beyond that is the ground covered by heaps of burning charcoals. Those who had been traitors to their masters wander there in every direction.

67-68. Śrāddha offered once in eleven months (or in the eleventh month) is conducive to liberation from there.

There is a Naraka filled with hot sands. It has terrible features. Those men who are engaged in (secret) flight on seeing that the master has arrived are cooked there. They undergo misery. Śrāddha offered in the twelfth month reaches them.

69. Whatever is offered by their kinsmen, whether it be water or cooked rice, at the close of a year these (people in the hell) eat on their way.

70. Thereafter, beyond the year, they get auspicious or inauspicious conditions in accordance with their Karmas and remain near Dharmarāja.

71. Thus after enduring the torments of these fifteen Narakas, those men are reborn into the mortal world.

72. Those who indulge in disputation and controversy take their birth in alien countries. Their satisfaction can be effected by offering libation every day.

73. Those who had been indulging in treachery towards the master, will attain their rebirth in an inglorious realm. If 'Hantakāra' ('Alas, it is a pity') is offered they will become satisfied.

74. If people take food without first offering unto the Pitṛs, Devas and Brāhmaṇas, they incur sins, whereupon they are reborn in a famine-infested area.

75. If on New-Moon day, Śrāddha is preformed they will become satisfied.

76. If people cause dissension between a husband and his wife who love each other, by uttering falsehoods about the one to the other, their wives will be unchaste.

77. If a woman utters ten words angrily when one is spoken to her, she becomes despicable to all the people and very ugly. She wanders here and there. If her kinsmen make gifts of virgins (in marriage) those women shall have happiness there.

78. He who puts an obstacle to gifts of virgins or who sells (girls) begets only daughters and never a son.

79. Those girls (daughters of such a person) become harlots, widows and unlucky. Their happiness can be brought about as a result of gifting virgins (in marriage).

80. If jewels are stolen or other scriptural texts (are taken up) those people become poor, dumb, blind or lame. By the gift of scriptural texts here, they will have happiness there (in the other world).

81. Thus these Narakas arising from the world of mortals (i.e. created for the punishment of sinning mortals) have been mentioned. Through these it becomes known whether an act done is good or bad.

82. Purity is regained as a result of pilgrimages.

Bhīṣma said:

83-84. Thus, O king, everything that I was asked has been explained to you. The Narakas number twentyone. O leading king, if you have any doubt in your heart ask me again.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYSEVEN

Means to Save One from Tortures in Hells

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Fear has gripped me after listening to the description of the Narakas. O king, how can even those persons be liberated who have committed sins? Is it through Vratas, observances of restraints, Homas or by resorting to holy centres and shrines?

Bhīṣma said:

2. If bones of the men are cast into Gaṅgā the Naraka (hellish) fire is incapable of adversely affecting those people remaining in between (dead but not having attained the final results of Karmas).

3. If Śrāddha is performed in Gaṅgā by the sons (and descendants in their name,) those ancestors go beyond the Naraka, after being seated in an aerial chariot.

4. After committing a sin, O king, if the people perform expiatory rites as laid down or make gifts of gold, they will not fall into Naraka.

5. The remaining ones attain Svarga or Naraka in accordance with their Karma, O king.

6. Those who die in front of their master in Dhārātīrtha (holy Tīrtha in the form of battle) (i.e. those who die in battle on behalf of their king) attain the greatest goal far beyond Naraka.

7. He who casts off his body in Vārāṇasī, Kurukṣetra, Naimiṣa, Nāgarapura (i.e. Vādnagara), Prayāga or Prabhāsa

will never see Naraka even if he has incurred Mahāpātakas (great sins).

8. If one's own son performs the rite of *Utsarga* (dedicatory release) of a dark bull along with the celebration of its marriage with a heifer, he will never see Naraka even if he happens to be a Brāhmaṇa-slayer.

9. After adopting *Prāyopaveśana* (religious fast unto death) with due meditation on Janārdana, if a person casts off his life, he never sees Naraka.

10. Those who perform *Prāyopaveśana* in the holy shrine Citreśvara will never fall into Naraka.

11. He who serves food in time or out of time to the distressed, the blind and the miserable while they are going on a pilgrimage and are excessively fatigued on the way, never sees a hell.

12. He who makes the gift of *Jaladhenu* (water in the shape of a cow's mouth) when the Sun is in Taurus or *Tiladhenu* (gingelly seeds in the shape of a cow) when the Sun is in Capricorn never sees Naraka.

13. By viewing Somanātha on a Monday or at the time of lunar eclipse and by taking the holy dip in the ocean or in Sarasvatī, one never goes to hell.

14. He who takes his holy bath in river Sannihiti¹ in Kurukṣetra on a Sunday when there is solar eclipse (when Rāhu swallows the Sun), never sees Naraka.

15. He who silently circumambulates Tripuṣkara on Full-Moon day in the month of Kārttika when the constellation is Kṛttikā, never sees Naraka.

16. Those who view Caṇḍīśa at the time of the transit of the Sun into Capricorn on a Sunday, never fall into hell.

17. O king, those who save a cow from quagmire, a Brāhmaṇa lady from slavery, good people from a thief, a Brāhmaṇa from murder, never fall into hell.

18. Thus, O king, everything I was asked has been narrated to you, viz. How a man falls into hell even if he commits a minor sin and how he avoids falling therein by means of his (good) activities.

1. Mbh, Vana 83, 190-199 glorifies this ancient Tirtha.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYEIGHT

Disobedience by Andhakāśura

Sūta said:

1-3. There is another deity at the entrance to the cave. By viewing the Lord engaged in sleeping and lying down in water (i.e. Viṣṇu) even a sinner becomes liberated.

After taking his bath at the entrance to the cave, that is a holy resort to all the worlds, the devotee should adore with great devotion the Lord lying on his bedstead of Śeṣa. He shall attain liberation from the sins committed between birth and death.

He who devoutly worships the Lord of Suras who has sound sleep for the four months of the rainy season is not reborn here again.

4-5. Formerly the highly esteemed sages adored (and served) that Lord. They took the clay from his splendid shrine. Thereby they attained the great place, the great region of Viṣṇu. From this Lord's adoration during these four months, one gets that benefit which accrues from all the Tīrthas and all the Yajñas.

6. By the adoration of Jalaśāyin (Lord Viṣṇu) for four months, men attain that merit which men obtain after meeting with death while saving a cow.

7. Even a man of sinful conduct, one who indulges in other men's wives, a slayer of a Brāhmaṇa, a person who regularly drinks liquor and a despised person that murders women, becomes liberated through the adoration of the Lord for these four months.

The sages said:

8. It has been said by Your Holiness that the Lord there lies down in water at the entrance to the cave. O Sūta, we have a great doubt there.

9. It is heard that Lord Madhusūdana lies down in the Milk Ocean resorting to the yogic slumber for ever.

10. How does that Lord settle down at the entrance to the cave and lie down there? Do narrate this entirely. We have great deal of interest therein.

Sūta said:

11. O highly esteemed ones, it is true that Madhusūdana (Viṣṇu) lies down on his couch of Śeṣa in his yogic slumber in the Milk Ocean.

12. Listen with attention as to how that Lord himself resorted to that holy place in the form of Jalaśāyin.

13. I shall describe how he grants salvation to men on being adored for four months as staying there well settled.

14. During these four months are to be avoided all holy rites, and important ceremonies like Yajñas, marriages etc., O Brāhmaṇas.

15. Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, after bowing down to that Lord of Devas, one endowed with all the Guṇas within, though without attributes, I shall explain it unto you.

16. Obeisance unto that unmanifest one, identical with all the Devas, the omniscient one, the Lord of Kavis (Seers and Poets) and the soul of all living beings.

17. Once upon a time (in days of yore) there was a terrible Dānava, the great Hiranyakaśipu, who was struck down by Viṣṇu after assuming the body of Man-lion.

18. He had two sons Prahlaḍa and Andhaka who were endowed with all (auspicious) characteristics and were unrivalled in battlefield.

19. When the great Asura, Hiranyakaśipu passed on to the other world, Prahlaḍa was persuaded by the ministers to get himself crowned.

20. He never desired that great kingdom belonging to his father and grandfather that came to him (by succession). He was such a wise demon. Why he did so I shall explain.

21. Dānavas have a permanent hatred for the Discus-bearing Lord. But he never had any hatred at all for him.

22. For this reason all the sons of Diti were abandoned by him. Even abandoning his own kingdom, he resorted to Viṣṇu.

23. Thereupon, Andhaka was set up on the hereditary realm by the petty-minded Dānavas bent upon hating Viṣṇu.

24. By propitiating the Four-faced Lord of Devas, Andhaka obtained immortality as long as the Sun, the Moon and the stars shine.

25. Being well equipped thus, thanks to the boon, he started confrontation with Śakra.

26. He defeated Śakra in the great battle. He forcibly seized the shares (of gods) in the Yajñas. He went to Amarāvati and drove Śatakratu out. Accompanied by his own people he captured Svarga.

27. Śakra propitiated Śaṅkara, the benefactor of all the worlds. He served the Lord like a servant accompanied by all the Devas.

28. After a great deal of time, the Pināka-bearing Lord became pleased with him. He said to him: "I shall grant you a boon, O Śakra, tell me, what I should do."

Indra said:

29. O Lord of Suras, Andhaka has taken away my kingdom forcibly, Retrieve it from him quickly along with the shares in the Yajñas.

30. On hearing the words of the distressed one, the Moon-crested Lord said: "I shall give you the kingdom of the three worlds."

31-33. He sent his efficient leader of the Gaṇas named Virabhadra as a messenger to him: "Go and tell Andhaka: 'It is my command that you leave off Svarga. Go to the earth, your traditional abode, and rule over that kingdom. Renounce the shares in the Yajñas. If not I will kill you quickly.'

He then went to Andhaka and conveyed to him clearly what was said by Śaṁbhu.

34. The leader of the Gaṇas, of exceptionally great intellect, did everything towards the fulfilment of the task of his Lord. Thereupon, the excessively powerful Andhaka laughed and said:

35-39. "As it is, a messenger should not be killed. Therefore, I am not killing you. By the way, who can this Śaṅkara be who dares to speak to me thus? Does't that deluded one know me? Or does he wish for his own death?

Or this may be the truth. He is disgusted with life. He is oppressed with perpetual poverty. He is without the enjoyment of any pleasure. His playground is the cremation ground. Ashes constitute his physical unguent. The serpents are his

ornaments. The quarters are his garments and matted hairs are his forelocks of hair.

How can such a man have any interest in life? This is why he speaks to me thus. So, O messenger, go immediately and convey to him these words of mine:

40-41. 'Leave off this Kailāsa. Go to Vārāṇasī and perform penance. This place Kailāsa has been granted to my son Vṛka by me along with all its riches. There is no doubt about it. Otherwise, O Śaṅkara, I will take away your life along with that of Indra.'

42. On hearing it, Virabhadra rebuked him repeatedly. Infuriated excessively, he went back to Kailāsa.

43. Then he told Pinākin about the harsh words of the Dānava. That infuriated the Wielder of Pināka Bow.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYNINE

Birth of Bhṛṅgīriṭi

Sūta said:

1. In the meantime, Śaṁbhū, with eyes turned red due to anger, mounted his bull and proceeded towards Amarāvati. He was accompanied by all his Gaṇas and all the Suras beginning with Indra.

2. On seeing that the army of Devas and Mahādeva along with his Gaṇas had arrived Andhaka attained great delight.

3. Then he came out for battle along with his army consisting of four divisions. He got into his excellent chariot fitted with horses of splendid white colour.

4. Then a battle ensued between the Dānavas and the Devas as well as the Gaṇas of hideous shapes making death to the point of no return (i.e. no return from battle till death).

5. For a full thousand years the battle (war) lasted. The (strength of) Devas became dwindled day by day but not that of the Dānavas.

6. At the close of a thousand years, the infuriated Moon-crested Lord raised his trident and pierced him (Andhaka) with his own hand.

7. Though pierced with that trident, the great Asura did not meet with his death, thanks to the power of the boon of Brahmā.

8. He rose up again and fought with the great Ātman (Śiva). In his fury he killed many Gaṇas.

9. He repeatedly struck Śaṅkara with his mace.

10. Thus the terrible fight of Andhaka with the Pināka-bearing Lord continued for a thousand years. It instilled terror into all the worlds.

11-13. The Daitya did not meet with his death though pierced with the trident. The powerful demon rose up again and again and began to hit (the enemies) with his club. Śaṅkara realized that he was not to be killed (he could not be killed) by any of the Heaven-dwellers, by the power of the boon granted by Brahmā. He pierced the Daitya, with the tip of his trident and raised him up in the sky.

He lifted the trident like an umbrella even as he (Andhaka) hung with face down. Blood oozed out of his body and fell on the Ground.

14. At the close of a thousand years only three of the constituents of his body, viz. skin, bone and sinews, remained. The remaining four were lost.

15. Realizing that he had become feeble due to the wastage of the constituents of his body, he adopted conciliatory tactics with the Pināka-bearing Lord by eulogizing him.

Andhaka said:

16. I am an evil soul and defiled in speech. Hence I did not know that you have such vigour as this. Hence what is done by you is proper.

17. O excellent one among Suras, this is proper for me who have become blind due to pride and am bereft of the power of discrimination. I am over-arrogant due to my prowess and am left without discretion.

18. An impudent fellow without humility cannot stay long even after obtaining fortune, learning and prowess as in my own case. I am over-puffed up due to arrogance.

19. I am a sinner. I have been indulging in sinful activities. Even my very soul is sinful. I am born of sin. O Lord Īśāna,

save me. Be the destroyer of all sins.

20. I am grief-stricken. I am a piteous creature. I am a wretched one devoid of power. O Lord, it behoves you to save me. O Lord, I have sought refuge in you.

21. I am a wicked one. O Parameśvara, I am a sinner.¹ Hence this thought about you has risen in me, O sinless one.

22. When all the sins are destroyed, one begins to contemplate on Śiva.

23. O Three-eyed Lord, he who simply repeats your name, attains salvation. Why not then one who is engaged in your worship?

24. Days come and go in the case of those devoid of your worship. Those of the dead cannot come back to the living.

25. (Let me be) a leper, a sickly one, a lame or a deaf one. But let not (my) birth be in the family of that person to whom Śambhu is not a deity.

26. Hence, O Lord, release me. Welcome me now. My demoniac nature has gone away. The kingdom has been left off by me, O Lord.

27. My sons, my grandsons and wives, along with my riches have been abandoned by me. O most excellent one among the Suras, uttering the solemn oath thrice I touch your feet.

28-30. On hearing his words, the Lord knew for certain that he had been rid of sins. He was slowly lowered down from the trident and he stood there humbly. The Lord then named him Bhṛṅgīṛiṭi, and said: "You will always be my favourite. O dear son, you will also be a favourite of Nandin, Mahākāla and the Elephant-faced One (Gaṇeśa). O gentle one, stay here happily. You will never remember your kinsmen."

31. He promised, "So it shall be". He bowed down to the Moon-crested One. He stayed there along with all the Gaṇas and took refuge in the Lord.

1. Evidently this is wrong. Perhaps the words *Pāpayukta* is a misprint for *Pāpamukta*. In Devanāgarī script ya (य) and Ma (म) are very similar.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTY

Vṛka's Conquest of Indra's Kingdom

Sūta said:

1-4. Thus, when the excellent Dānava Andhaka attained the status of Gaṇa, his son named Vṛka became disinterested in conquering the enemies.

He was terrified extremely, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. Along with the Dānavas that survived he entered the inner region of the ocean that cannot be easily approached.

Thereupon, Śakra became delighted in mind. He bowed down to the Bull-emblem'd One and with his permission entered Amarāvati.

O excellent Brāhmaṇas, he ruled over the kingdom of all the three worlds happily. He regained his usual shares in the Yajñas performed on the earth.

5. In the meantime, Vṛka, the son of Andhaka, quickly came out of the ocean and reached Jambūdvīpa.

6-7. He believed that the holy spot of Hātakesvara was highly meritorious and it yielded excellent Siddhi. Here his father Andhaka, when he was a wicked one, had performed penance.

He (Vṛka) remained there well concealed without the knowledge of anyone. He performed penance there. He meditated devoutly upon the Lotus-born Lord, the most excellent one among Suras.

8. He thus performed a penance for a thousand years. For another thousand years the intelligent Daitya meditated on Pitāmaha and performed the penance subsisting on water.

9. Then, O excellent Brahmanas, for the same period of time, he had the intake of air only. Conquering all the sense-organs, he remained touching the ground with the tip of his toe.

10. Thus, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, when the fifth millennium arrived, Brahmā became pleased on observing his great penance.

11-12. Then, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, he came to that Gartā (chasm where he stayed) and said to him: "O Vṛka, desist

from this terrible penance, Welfare unto you. Choose as boon what has been always cherished by you in the mind."

Vṛka said:

13. O Lord Pitāmaha, if you are pleased with me, if a boon has to be granted to me, then make me free from old age and death.

Śrī Brahmā said:

14. O dear one, you will become free from old age and death, with my favour. There is no doubt about it. It is the truth that has been mentioned by me.

15. After saying thus, Brahmā vanished there itself. Well contented, Vṛka returned to his own father's abode.

16. He went to the mountain named Raivataka that remains splendid with the flowers of all the seasons. There he took counsel with his ministers immediately. Then with a desire to fight with Indra he marched against him.

17-18. Indra realized that the powerful Dānava was free from death and old age due to the power of Parameṣṭhin. He then forsook Amarāvati, his city, due to fear and hurriedly went to the world of Brahmā accompanied by all the Devas.

19. In the meantime, Vṛka too reached heaven accompanied by his delighted attendants and soldiers.

20. Then he underwent the coronation ceremony along with floral bath administered by Śukra and set himself in the position (place) of Indra.

21. Having been crowned in the realm of the Devas by Śukra, Vṛka established (appointed) Daityas in the posts of the Devas.

22. O Brāhmaṇas, for the sake of the shares in the Yajñas, they subjected themselves to the control of Śukra and appropriated the shares of Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras and Maruts.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYONE

Importance of Ekādaśī Vrata

Sūta said:

1-3. After gaining control over the kingdom of the three worlds by chance, he commanded the entire universe (with certain do's and don't's).

He had a thousand times more of strength, vitality, courage and fury than that of Andhaka. He was highly hideous and horrible.

No man on the earth was to perform Yajña, Homa and Jāpa, (This order he promulgated) after being convinced that the Daityas were well-established in the position of the Suras.

4. There were a few devout fellows. Whenever they wanted to perform holy rites, Homa or Japa in order to propitiate the Devas, they did so after resorting to a secret place.

5. Then, the Daityas staying in Svarga, became deprived of shares in the Yajñas. They became highly suspicious on account of the shares received from human beings.

6. Thereupon, the Dānava became extremely furious. He sent efficient secret agents to the mortal world and ordered them:

7. "Whoever performs Yajña, Homa or Dāna on the earth for Devas and whoever among Devas accepts it, should be killed by you all unhesitatingly. That is my order."

8. On hearing his order, the extremely powerful Dānavas went to the earth and moved round secretly.

9. If they found anyone engaged in Japa, Homa and Svādhyāya (self-study and chanting of the Vedas), they killed him with sharp swords.

10. In the meantime, an excellent sage Sāṅkṛti hid himself in the *Gartā* (chasm) where, O Brāhmaṇas, penance had been formerly performed by Vṛka. He performed the penance secretly.

11. On seeing him ensconced in the cave and performing penance, they rebuked him and spoke harsh words.

12-13. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, they saw a four-armed idol of Vāsudeva installed in front of him and adored with scents and flowers. Thereupon, they angrily raised the weapons and struck him. They were unable to kill him, because he was

enveloped (and protected) by the refulgence of Viṣṇu. Even their bright weapons became entirely blunted.

14. They were disgusted and ashamed due to this discomfiture and conveyed the information to Vṛka, the leader of the Dānavas:

15-17. "O highly esteemed one, in the holy spot of Hātakeśvara, a certain Brāhmaṇa had placed the image of Viṣṇu in front of him and was performing penance. It is the place where penance has been performed by you out of fear of all the Heaven-dwellers. Stealthily hiding himself from us, he performs a similar penance. On account of this, when we struck him, all the weapons became blunted. So, do what is proper here."

18. On hearing their words Vṛka became furious. He hurriedly went to the place where Sāṅkṛti was present.

19. After going there, he threw the image of Viṣṇu out of the pit very far off and rebuked him repeatedly.

20-21. He kicked him with his right foot and then with the left one. Then he said to him: "You should be killed by me because you secretly worship my enemy Janārdana. Therefore, I will kill you." After saying thus the Lord of Daityas struck him with a sword.

22. Though his sword was very sharp, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the moment it was employed (struck) on his body, it split into a hundred pieces.

23. Thereupon, Sāṅkṛti became furious and cursed him:

24. "O sinful one, since I have been kicked by you with the feet, therefore those two feet will fall off instantly on the ground."

Sūta said:

25. As soon as this was uttered by him, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the feet fell on the ground like five-hooded serpents.

26. At the same time, there was a great commotion among the soldiers and Vṛka as well as among the women in particular.

27. On coming to know that he had become lame Devas came to the top of Meru and killed his attendants.

28-29a. The Daityas who survived the slaughter went into the nether worlds. Vṛka who had become lame remained steadfastly engaged in his penance.

He was attended upon by all the women of his household. He was extremely grief-stricken and miserable.

29b. Indra regained his kingdom with all the thorns (enemies) exterminated.

30. Thereupon, holy rites were revived on the surface of the earth.

31. After the lapse of a long period of time, Pitāmaha became pleased with him. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, he came into the *Gartā* and spoke:

32. "O Vṛka, O dear one, I am pleased with you. O devotee of excellent holy rites, choose your boon. I shall certainly grant it even if it be a rare one."

Vṛka said:

33. O Lord, if you are pleased with me, if a boon has to be granted to me, then, O Lord Brahmā, grant me the gift of feet so that, with your favour, my lameness may be cured.

34-35. On hearing it, the Lotus-born One, summoned Sāṅkṛti there and said to him in conciliatory terms: "O excellent Brāhmaṇa, do that unto this Vṛka whereby his lameness disappears. Do this at my behest."

Sāṅkṛti said:

36. O Pitāmaha, falsehood has never been uttered by me before, even in a joke. It is known to you, O Lord of the chiefs of Devas, How can I then do it?

Brahmā said:

37. This Vṛka, the most excellent one among Daityas, is always devoted to me. You are my grandson and a favourite of mine always. Therefore, I request you:

38. Of course, O excellent sage, I am not able to nullify (make false) your statement.

Sāṅkṛti said:

39. This Daitya is an extremely wicked soul. He has established himself contrary to the interests of Devas. He is (more so) in the case of the noble-souled Vāsudeva, my preceptor.

40. This sinner and defiler of Brāhmaṇas deserves the state of lameness in general because he has inordinate strength and is free from death and old age.

41. O Lord, it was you who have made him so formerly. If he regains the feet, he will destroy (kill) the entire world including Devas Asuras and human beings.

42. Hence let him remain in the same form. It does not behove you to worry over it, since, O Lord, you have to think about the three worlds

Brahmā said:

43. At the advent of rainy season, it is not proper to undertake a campaign of victory on the part of a victorious warrior in particular, except in the case of onset of winter and summer.

44. Hence, if he were to be endowed with feet during the four months of rainy season and also made unapproachable to all the worlds, he may very well carry on his activities patiently.

45. So, let Vṛka, the most excellent one among Dānavas, be endowed with feet whereby, O Brāhmaṇa, the welfare of Devas and Brāhmaṇas may take place (unfettered).

46. If this arrangement is followed, O Brāhmaṇa, your word will not become falsified. Nor will his penance become futile.

Sūta said:

47. "So may it be", said the noble-souled Sāṅkṛti. When he said so, the feet came out afresh from his body.

48. Again the hideous Dānava became lame, O excellent Brāhmaṇas and remained in the Gartā.

49. For those eight months he remains there extremely miserable along with his wives and kinsmen. He could not do anything excepting the recollection of his great enmity with the Devas day and night.

50. During the remaining four months he angrily came out and inflicted injuries on the Devas including Indra and human beings.

51-52. He used to destroy all the sacred place. He used

to molest the womenfolk of the Devas, all the parks, houses and cities during the four months.

53. Thereupon, the Devas approached Janārdana, the Lord of Devas, who permanently lay down on his couch¹ of Śeṣa in the Ocean of Milk.

54. They stayed near him for the duration of the four rainy months. For the remaining eight months they went back to heaven without the least trace of fear.

55. (Their only respite was) when the extremely terrible Daitya became lame.

Once the king of Devas, the most excellent one among Suras, said to Br̥haspati towards the close of Āṣāḍha. He was then extremely distressed:

56. "O venerable preceptor, that month in the rainy season has arrived instilling fear into us. It is now that the demon Vṛka will descend on us after regaining his pair of feet.

57. So we have to go perforce to the Milk Ocean, the abode of Keśava. Let it not be that we continue to be distressed and stay as dependents of others.

58. We are compelled to leave our abodes, beds, seats, diverse kinds of vehicles and many other favoured objects in the house.

59. Hence, O excellent one among the sages, tell us some Vrata, Niyama or Homa.

60. Thereby we will have our beds not bereft of our spouses. Thereby we will not be compelled to leave our abodes.

61. I am utterly disgusted, O excellent one among chiefs of Brāhmaṇas, with the repeated loss of my position whenever the rainy season sets in every year.

62. I will have to sleep again on the bare ground for the four months without my wife. I will have to observe celibacy and remain dejected due to fright."

63. On hearing the words of (Indra) who was distressed due to fear, Br̥haspati meditated for a long time and said to Lord Śatakratu (Indra):

64. "There is a Vrata named *Aśūnyaśayanam*¹ ('the bed that is not vacant') on a par with a great penance. Perform it with concentration for propitiating Viṣṇu.

1. Cf. HD V. i, p. 264.

65. You should perform it at the Milk Ocean when Viṣṇu, the slayer of Madhu, is present. He, the Lord who lies down in water, who is the source of origin of the universe, will grant you what is beneficial to you.

66. With his favour, O Vāsava, your bed shall not be vacant. There shall not be any break (in staying) in the house. All enemies will be destroyed.”

Sūta said:

67. When that Vrata named *Aśūnyaśayana* was duly performed, Lord Viṣṇu became pleased. Then he said to the Lord of Devas.

68. “O Śakra of excellent holy rites, welfare unto you. Choose your boon. I am pleased with this Vrata performed during the four months. Hence, O Lord of Devas, request for what had been in you mind forever.”

Indra said:

69. You too very well know how disconcerted I have been made by the evil-minded leader of Dānavas named Vṛka.

70. My rule over the three worlds extends only to eight months in every year. He comes down upon me during the remaining four months.

71. Having realized this and taking pity on me, O most excellent one among the Suras, do something whereby my rule shall be a perpetual one.

Viṣṇu said:

72. He has been made by the Lotus-born One, one without old age and death. Therefore, when he continues to live, how can you maintain your rule?

73. Still, O Lord of Devas, I shall render the greatest benefit unto you.

74-75. For four months I shall leave the Milk Ocean, go to the holy spot named Hātakeśvara and shall assiduously lie down over the demon, in the company of goddess Lakṣmi. I shall make him incapable of moving.

76. O thousand-eyed One, afflicted with my weight he will never move away from that spot. This beneficial activity should always be carried out by me for your sake every year.

77. Hence, do go now and rule over the heavenly kingdom free from thorns (enemies). At the advent of the rainy season, you should not be afraid at all on this account.

78. O Lord of Devas, if any one devoutly adores me as lying down there, by means of this Vrata, I will grant him everything he desires.

Sūta said:

79. After saying thus, Hṛṣikeśa dismissed Śatakratu now completely rid of all his fear, so that he could work for the prosperity of his kingdom.

80. Thereafter, for ever, on the eleventh day in the bright half of Āṣāḍha, the Lord himself comes to the holy spot Hāṭakeśvara.

81. Then he assiduously lies down on Vṛka. Overwhelmed thus by him (the Lord), he (the demon) could not even move.

82-83. Afflicted thus with the weight of the Lord he became well-nigh dead. On the eleventh lunar day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika, Viṣṇu wakes up and proceeds back to the Milk Ocean. As a result of the curse of Sāṅkṛti, Vṛka invariably became lame.

84. Thus Hari never left his bed for those four months, because he was afraid of (the misdeeds of) that wicked-souled Dānava, the Lord of Asuras.

85. Then all the holy Yajña rites are not performed by men because Lord puruṣa, Yajña, being asleep, does not partake of his share.

86. Besides Yajñas, all auspicious ceremonies beginning with the gift of virgins (i.e. marriages) and Cūḍākaraṇa (Tonsure ceremony) are also not performed.

87. Excepting *Annaprāsana* (first feeding of food to the baby) and *Simantonnayana* (the ceremony during the sixth or eighth month of pregnancy) all other rites, O Brāhmaṇas, if performed when the Lord of the universe is asleep, will become futile.

88. All the Vratas and Niyamas a man does, when the Lord of the chiefs of Devas is asleep, shall be useless.

89. Hence in order to propitiate that Lord while Janārdana is asleep, men should assiduously abstain from Vratas.

90. Whatever excellent rite is performed on the eleventh day after Hari rises up from his bed, shall have everlasting benefit.

91. Of what avail is much talk? Hari lying down on the Daitya, becomes highly pleased with the Vrata performed by men.

92-94. Thus Lord Janārdana who is asleep said: "If a man takes cereal food on that day (i.e. eleventh day) he becomes a sinner. He may suffer from fever or excruciating pain. Hence a sensible man should abstain from food assiduously on the *Harvāsara* (Ekādaśī) day on the other occasions also. Why then should he take food on the day when he goes to sleep and on the day when he wakes up?

Sūta said:

95-96. Thus everything that I have been asked, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, as to why Janārdana lies down in the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara for four months after leaving the Milk Ocean, has been narrated by me to you all. Now listen to the benefit that will come to one when the Lord is propitiated.

97. The man who observes the Vrata and worships that Lord for the four rainy months, goes where that Lord is well established.

98. If a person adores the Lotus-eyed Lord there when asleep, of what avail are the many gifts given, Vratas performed and fasts undertaken?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYTWO

Vratas and Niyamas to Be Observed in Cāturmāsa

The sages said:

1. Do tell us what else should be performed by way of Vrata, Niyama, Homa, Japa or Dāna when the Lord of the

chiefs of Devas armed with conch, discus and club is asleep.

Sūta said:

2-4. Pitāmaha has said, O Brāhmaṇas, that whatever be the Niyama that is observed when the Garuḍa-emblem Lord (Viṣṇu) is asleep, shall accord infinite benefit. Hence with all efforts a sensible man must take up some Niyama, Japa, Homa, Vrata or Svādhyāya. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, it should be performed for the purpose of pleasing the Discus-armed One (Viṣṇu).

5. The man who spends the four months of rainy season with only a single meal per day with Vāsudeva in view becomes endowed with wealth.

6. He who takes food along with the constellations¹ (? as per constellation) while Janārdana is asleep shall become rich, handsome and intelligent (of good mental proclivities).

7. He who spends the four months of rainy season with fasts on alternate days, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, shall always reside in Vaikuṇṭha.

8. He who takes only one meal in the course of six-meal times (i.e. three days) while Janārdana is asleep, shall obtain the full benefit of Rājasūya and Āśvamedha sacrifices.

9. He who always spends the four months with fasts of three nights' duration, shall not be born in the world at all.

10. The man who always spends the four months with alternate meals in the mornings and evenings (i.e. one day evening meal and the next day morning meal and so on till the end of Cāturmāsya) gets the benefit of Agniṣṭoma Yajña.

11. If anyone observes the *Ayācita* (Non-begging) Vrata while Madhusūdana is asleep, he will never be separated from his kinsmen.

12. He who eschews oil bath and especially the use of ghee during the four months of rainy season, shall become one enjoying pleasures in heaven.

13. The man who spends all the four months observing celibacy, shall stay in heaven as he pleases, after going there riding in an excellent aerial chariot.

14. He who eschews liquor and meat all these four months and takes bath without (use of) oil, shall always be liberated.

1. This is a vague name of the Vrata. It could not be traced in the list of Vratas in HD V. i.324-26.

15-16. The person who eschews *Śāka* (vegetables, greens) in the month of Śrāvaṇa, curds in Bhādrapada, milk in Āśvayuja (Āśvina) months and meat in Kārttika, for ever shall not be affected by sins committed in the course of a year. Manu, the son of the Self-born Lord, has spoken these words, O excellent Brāhmaṇas.

17-18. During the month of Śrāvaṇa, Brahmā passes on to Śāka (vegetables, greens), Viṣṇu to curd in the month of Bhādrapada, Hara to milk in the month of Āśvayuja and all the three pass on to meat in the Kārttika month. Hence one should eschew all these in every respect during these months.

19. The man who eschews bell-metal (utensils) when the Garuḍa-embled Lord is asleep, shall obtain the full benefit of Vājapeya and Atirātra.

20. If an excellent Brāhmaṇa abstains from eating pungent and saline (foodstuffs), all his *Pūrtas* (actions of pious liberality and social service) shall become effectively powerful.

21. He who performs Homa during these four months with gingelly seeds and raw rice-grains uttering Mantras pertaining to Viṣṇu and concluding it with "*Svāhā*" shall not fall sick.

22. If anyone takes bath, stands before Viṣṇu and performs the Japa of *Puruṣasūkta*, his intellect increases like the Moon in the bright half of a month.

23. He who holds in his hand fruits and circumambulates Viṣṇu one hundred eight times silently, will not be afflicted (adversely affected) by sins.

24. He who within his capacity serves sweet cooked-rice to eminent Brāhmaṇas, especially in the month of Kārttika shall obtain the benefit of Agniṣṭoma.

25. He who recites the four Vedas in the shrine of Viṣṇu during the four months of rainy season, shall always be endowed with learning.

26. If any one always makes arrangement for dance and music programmes in the abode (shrine) of Viṣṇu, the celestial damsels will dance before him when he goes to heaven.

27. A Brāhmaṇa who sponsors dance and music programmes during days and nights during the four months of rainy season shall attain the status of a Gandharva.

28. O Brāhmaṇas, all these Niyamas (restraints and observances) may be carried out all the four months or in the month of Kārttika alone.

29. Still, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, they are to be carried out in Kārttikī through devotees of Viṣṇu by one who is desirous of getting the benefit of both the worlds. .

30-31. The Brāhmaṇas who always eschew meat, bronze-vessels, shaving, honey, sexual intercourse and meal in the month of Kārttika shall get the benefit of all the Niyamas mentioned before.

32. O Brāhmaṇas, he who offers lights on the dome over the place (shrine) of Lord Jalaśāyin shall acquire the benefit of the six Vratas mentioned above.

33. Whatever is easily available and liked the most should be checked during the four months by persons desirous of attaining auspiciousness.

34. After the observance of the Niyama, the devotee shall make a gift to a Brāhmaṇa of the very article subjected to restraint, within his capacity. There shall be the benefit thereof.

35. A man who is foolish enough to spend the four months without Niyama, Vrata or Jāpa is no better than dead even if he is alive.

36. What are called *Kāka-yavas* (barren corns bereft of grain) and *Aranyatilas* (wild gingelly seeds) are only in name. They are not substantial. In the same way these men (who do not observe Niyamas etc.) are worthless like them on the earth.

37. Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, one should assiduously observe at least one little Niyama in Kārttika.

38-39. Thus, O Brāhmaṇas, everything connected with the *Cāturmāsya-vrata* and the greatness thereof has been narrated to you all in detail. He who listens to this always, or reads it with concentration shall become rid of the sins committed during the four months.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYTHREE

Benefits of Bath in Gaṅgā

The sages said:

1-2. O Sūta, O highly esteemed one, we desire to hear from

you in detail the efficacy of the *Cāturmāsya Vratas*. Do describe this after showing favour to us. By imbibing the nectar of your words, our faith increases further.

Sūta said:

3-4. Listen ye all, O sages, to the efficacy of *Cāturmāsyavrata*. I shall explain the greatness thereof in front of you. Formerly, Nārada listened to the explanation of different kinds of procedure of the Vratas from Brahmā. Thereafter, he respectfully asked Brahmā:

Nārada said:

5. O highly esteemed Lord of Devas, O Brahmā, many Vratas have been listened to by me from you. But my mind is not fully satisfied.

6. Now I wish to hear about the splendid Vrata of *Cāturmāsya*.

Brahmā said:

7. O celestial sage, listen from me to the splendid *Cāturmāsya* Vrata. On listening to this, salvation of men in Bhārata Khaṇḍa is not difficult to attain.

8. This Lord is the bestower of salvation. He is the cause of redemption from worldly existence. Merely by remembering him, one is rid of all sins.

9. Human birth is extremely rare in the world. Nobility of birth therein is still rarer. There too kind-heartedness and auspicious association with good people therein is rare.

10. Where association with saintly people is not available, devotion to Viṣṇu and performance of Vratas especially during *Cāturmāsya* is very auspicious. It causes delight to Viṣṇu.

11-13. If anyone does not perform Vratas during *Cāturmāsya*, his Puṇya (merit) is meaningless. When the *Cāturmāsya* arrives, all the Tīrthas, Dānas, meritorious shrines etc. resort to Viṣṇu.

His life is splendid with well-nourished body if a sensible man bows down to Hari at the advent of *Cāturmāsya*. Devas are contented with him and they bestow boons on him as long as he lives.

14. If after attaining human birth, any one is averse to the

observance of *Cāturmāsya*, they say that a hundred sins cling to his body. There is no doubt about it.

15. Birth in human kind is rare in the world. The devotion to Hari is also rare, especially in the four months when Lord Janārdana is asleep.

16. During these four months, a man shall take his holy ablution early in the morning. He will get the full benefit of all Kratus and rejoice in heaven like Devas.

17-18. He who takes his holy bath in the *Cāturmāsya* shall attain Siddhi. If one bathes in a stream, lake or well, thousands of his sins get dissolved instantly. If one bathes in Puṣkara, Prayāga or in any reservoir anywhere during the four months, there is no limit to his merit.

19. One who bathes at least one day during the four months in Revā, in the holy spot of Bhāskara in Prācī Sarasvatī where she joins the sea, cannot be affected by any sin (defect).

20. If one bathes for three days with great concentration in Narmadā when Lord Jagannātha is asleep, his sin is split into a thousand pieces.

21. He who takes his bath at sunrise in Godāvarī for a fortnight pierces through his body originating from Karmas and goes to the same world as that of Viṣṇu.

22. He who bathes in water mixed with gingelly seeds, Āmalaka (Indian gooseberry) water and the water mixed with Bilva leaves during *Cāturmāsya* is not affected by any defect.

23. A man should go near any watery expanse and remember Gaṅgā. That water becomes Gaṅgā water. One should take the holy ablution therein.

24. Gaṅgā flows from the toe of the Lord of Devas. It is said to be the destroyer of sins always, especially during the four months.

25. Since Lord Viṣṇu, on being remembered, destroys thousands of sins, the water from his feet held on the head becomes auspicious,

26. Lord Nārāyaṇa occupies water during the four months. A bath in contact with a part of Viṣṇu's splendour excels the bath in all the Tirthas.

27. Ten types of holy ablution should be performed. It has the great benefit of Viṣṇu's names, especially when the Lord is asleep. The man attains divinity.

28. O Brāhmaṇa, if an auspicious and meritorious rite is performed without taking bath, it is fruitless. Rākṣasas accept the same.

29. One attains the truthful one through holy ablution. Bath is an eternal Dharma (sacred rite). After getting the benefit of salvation through Dharma (piety) one never becomes weary and disconsolate.

30. In the case of those conversant with spiritual matters, the meritorious ones who have mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas and those who make all kinds of gifts, they attain purity through ablution.

31. Hari resorts to the body of one who has taken his bath and stands by it. He shall be the bestower of the full benefit in regard to all holy rites.

32. It is conducive to the destruction of all sins. For propitiating deities, it is necessary that one should take the holy ablution in water during the four months. It is destructive of all sins.

33. One should not take the holy bath at night nor in the Sandhyā (twilight) period. No bath (is allowed) with hot water at night. Purity is never attained thereby.

34. In all holy rites, it is laid down that purity is gained by viewing the Sun. During Cāturmāsya in particular, purity comes (is gained) from water.

35. If the body is not strong enough, one can purify oneself through *Bhasma-snāna* (applying ash over the body), *Mantra-snāna* or the water of Gaṅgā, O leading Brāhmaṇa.

36. He who takes the holy bath before Nārāyaṇa in the holy spots, Tīrthas and rivers, especially in Cāturmāsya becomes a purified soul.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYFOUR

Procedure of Adopting Niyama

Brahmā said:

1-3. When the Lord is asleep, one should offer libation to the Pitṛs with the mind fully endowed with faith, after taking

holy ablution.

It has great merit. After offering libations to the Pitṛs and propitiating Devas at a confluence of rivers there a person should perform Japa, Homa and other rites. It has infinite benefit.

All auspicious rites should be undertaken after remembering Govinda who alone is such as accords satisfaction to the Pitṛs, Devas, human beings etc.

4. In Cāturmāsya that is highly endowed with good features, one should perform all holy rites after sanctifying them by remembering the names (of the Lord). There should be faith in piety (Dharma).

5-6. Association with saintly people, devotion to the twice-born, propitiation of the preceptor, the deities and fire, gifts of cows, chanting of the Vedas, good activities of hospitality, truthful speech, devotion to cows and making of gifts are the means of acquiring piety. Particularly when Kṛṣṇa is asleep, Niyama (restraint) yields great merit.

Nārada said:

7. O Brahmā, of what nature is a Niyama? What is the benefit from a Niyama? Do tell me how Hari is pleased with a Niyama.

Brahmā said:

8. Restrānt (Niyama) of the eyes and others in regard to different kinds of activities should be practised by a person endowed with learning. Great happiness results from its practice.

9. This destroys the group of six (viz. Kāma, Krodha etc. and their associates). This is highly capable of curbing the enemies. This indeed is the root of all spirituality. This is the cause of happiness.

10. All the good qualities in the form of discrimination, forbearance, truthfulness etc. invariably abide there. That is the greatest region of Viṣṇu.

11. If a person has known this region, his ancestors will have that contentment and blessedness which accrues to one after performing Yajñas.

12. By resorting to Nirañjana (the Lord free from passion

of contamination) and by meditating on him even for a short while, the sins accumulated in the course of a hundred births become reduced to ashes.

13. Everyday his exhaustion due to hunger, thirst etc. becomes reduced. A Yogin who practises Niyama always when Hari is asleep, becomes distinguished.

14. If a man is not devoutly engaged in the practice of Yoga during Cāturmāsya, nectar has slipped from his hands. There is no doubt about it.

15. If the mind is restrained even as it is attracted perpetually towards all vishes and desires—that mind alone is the cause of his perfect knowledge and liberation.

16. Effort should always be made by a sensible man in regard to the restraint of the mind. With the mind well-curbed, the acquisition of perfect knowledge is definite.

17. The mind should be controlled through forbearance even as fire is controlled through water. It is said by learned men that all restraint is through forbearance alone.

18. Truthfulness alone is the greatest virtue. Truthfulness alone is the greatest austerity. Truthfulness alone is the highest knowledge. Virtue (Dharma) is well established in truthfulness.

19. Non-violence is the root of all piety. One should mentally ponder over it, speak about it and practise it through bodily activities.

20. Stealing and taking away other's wealth should always be avoided by all men. Particularly in Cāturmāsya, theft or misappropriation of the possession of Brāhmaṇas and deities should be avoided.

21-22a. Doing of immoral deeds (lit. deeds which should not be done) should always be avoided by learned men. O Brāhmaṇa, one who always acts free from baseness in regard to all activities is a real Yogin. He is highly intelligent. Intellect is his eye. He never thinks about himself (*Aham?*).

22b-23. Egotism is a poison that is present in the body of men. Hence it should always be eschewed, particularly when the Lord is asleep. A man should conquer anger and greed through (the practice of) desirelessness.

24-25. Thousands of sins flying away in thousand directions disappear from his body. One should conquer delusion and arrogance through quiescence and calmness. Similarly,

calmness should be acquired through reflection and contentment. One should restrain intolerance and rivalry through straightforwardness. One is then as good as the Lord of Sages.

26. In Cāturmāsya kindness is a virtue (Dharma). There is no virtue in the case of those who hate and assail other living beings. In regard to all types of Dāna activities, one should desist from violence to living beings.

27. Violence is the root of thousands of sins. So say the wise. Hence men should assiduously practise mercifulness towards living beings.

28. Hari is always present in the heart of all living beings. He who causes injury to living beings is (ultimately) defeated and disconcerted.

29. That ritual in which there is no compassion is considered to be defiled. Without compassion there is no perfect knowledge, virtue or wisdom.

30. Hence, the eternal virtue of compassion should be resorted to by persons with the feeling that the Lord is the soul of all. Especially in Cāturmāsya that should be practised.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYFIVE

Importance of Dāna in Cāturmāsya

Brahmā said:

1. They praise the virtue of munificence (as the greatest) among all virtuous activities always. Especially, when Hari is asleep Dāna (munificence, religious gift) becomes a means of attaining Brahman-hood (status of Brahman).

2. It has been mentioned that *Anna* (cooked food) is Brahman. Vital airs are established in (i.e. sustained by) *Anna*. Hence a man should make a liberal gift of cooked food and water.

3. He who bestows water becomes contented. He who bestows cooked food acquires everlasting happiness. There is no other gift on a par with that of cooked food and water. Nor can there be one in future.

4. The gift of cooked food excels all other types of gifts,

such as those of jewels, corals, silver, gold, garments etc.

5. The gift of cooked food, water and cows, the recitation of the Vedas everyday, and performing Homa in the sacred fire during Cāturmāsya yield great merit.

6. If you have a desire to get position in Vaikuṇṭha, or to be in touch with Viṣṇu or for the purpose of quelling all sins, you should be a giver of cooked food in Cāturmāsya.

7. It is the truth, O celestial sage, it is the truth that has been told by me to you, O Nārada, that in the course of thousands of births nothing that has not been given rebounds to one's advantage.

8. Hence all creatures become delighted with the gift of cooked food. Devas like the man who gives cooked food.

9. Ghee is to be given with great faith in pots in combination with diamond. A mortal who makes the gift of diamonds in Cāturmāsya is no (ordinary) man.

10. He who has to his credit, the offering of food to preceptors and Brāhmaṇas, the gift of ghee, extending of great hospitality during Cāturmāsya is no (ordinary) man.

11. The following are very rare during Cāturmāsya: listening to stories and anecdotes of the good, service to the pious people, contact with good people, adoration of Viṣṇu and keen interest in making gifts.

12. A man who gives cooked food during Cāturmāsya with the Pitṛs in view, shall attain Pitṛloka. His soul shall become rid of all sins.

13-14. All the Devas become pleased with the gift of cooked food and they grant what is desired. Even an ant takes food from anyone's house either at night or during day. Gift of food is never prohibited (either by day or at night). Gift of cooked food is very excellent when Hari is asleep. It destroys sins. It should not be restricted but extended even to enemies.

15. The gift of milk, curds and buttermilk during Cāturmāsya yields great merit. Offering of rice-ball at birthday is an excellent Dāna.

16. A person who makes the gift of vegetables does not see Naraka and the world of Yama. He who makes the gift of garments shall stay in Somaloka until all the living beings are annihilated (till Pralaya).

17. When the Lord is asleep, one should make gifts of flowers and garments according to one's capacity, even to other images (of deities). Thereby the line of progeny is saved from extinction.

18. A man who gives sandalpaste, agallochum and incense during Cāturmāsya, shall become endowed with sons and grandsons. He shall gain the form of Viṣṇu.

19. When the Lord of the universe is asleep, one should make gift of fruits to a Brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas. One does not then see the world of Yama.

20. He who makes the gift of learning, cows, and plots of land only to please Viṣṇu causes the redemption of his ancestors.

21. He who makes the gift of gingelly seeds and cooked food sprinkled with honey, or offers jaggery, salt, oil etc. with any deity in view, goes to the world of that deity.

22. By giving gingelly seeds during Cāturmāsya one shall cease to be born again (or to suck at the breasts of a mother). A person who gives barely goes to the world of Vāsava which is without destruction.

23. *Havya* should be consigned to the sacred fire and gifts should be made to the twice-born. Cows should be adored well, especially during Cāturmāsya.

24. Whatever merit has been acquired till this birth and hoarded well, gets destroyed if a deserving person goes away with averted face (without getting anything) during Cāturmāsya.

25. He who turns back from his word (i.e. one breaking one's promise) is doomed instantly. Day by day his promise gets accumulated.

26. Hence one should not make a promise (of future gifts). Even if it be little, it is to be given away quickly. Until it is given, the burden of (promised) gift increases.

27. If out of delusion, a man does not give away (promised) gifts it increases ten million times, but if one makes the gift in Cāturmāsya the increase is ten times more than that.

28. If one fails to make the gift, one falls into Naraka and remains there until fourteen Indras rule. Hence the gift promised should always be given away immediately.

29-33. What is given to one should not be taken back or given to another.

He who makes the gift of a bed to the most excellent Brāhmaṇa during Cāturmāsya in accordance with the injunctions in the Vedas, never goes to the abode of Yama.

A seat, a water pot, a vessel or a copper utensil should be assiduously given in accordance with one's capacity during Cāturmāsya.

By giving all types of gifts to Brāhmaṇas when the Lord of the universe is asleep, one rids oneself along with his ancestors of sins.

By giving a cow, a plot of land, a vessel of gingelly seeds and lamps to a Brāhmaṇa one becomes released from the three types of debts.

34. In Cāturmāsya, if one gives anything with any deity in view, one becomes liberated. (For) He, the Lord, is the creator of the universe, the protector of the worlds. He partakes of Yajña and gifts and he is the bestower of all benefits.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSIX

Greatness of Gifting Desired Objects

Brahmā said:

1-4. Viṣṇu is the bestower of desired things and people are always interested in desired things. Hence, with all efforts one should eschew that (any of the things desired).

A man should eschew a thing to gain the pleasure (favour) of Nārāyaṇa. (Thereby) that man of faith gets it (the thing eschewed) infinitetfold.

By eschewing bell-metal vessels, one is born as a king on the earth. One who takes food on the leaf of Pālāśa enjoys the identity with Brahman.

A man living as a householder should never eat in a copper vessel. Especially in Cāturmāsya one should avoid a copper vessel.

5. One who habitually takes food on the leaves of Arkaplant acquires unparalleled merit. Especially in Cāturmāsya one should take food on the leaves of Vaṭa.

6. Wise people should always take their meals on the leaves of Aśvattha. One who takes meals only once a day (on lives on the same menu) shall be king of the entire sphere of the earth.

7. By eschewing salt a man becomes handsome (fortunate). By abandoning cooked wheat-food one becomes a favourite of the common people.

8. One who restrains (himself) from eating vegetable dishes in Cāturmāsya, shall become long-lived. By eschewing Rasas (juices, beverages) one shall become inordinately strong. By eschewing Madhu (honey, liquor), one shall become beautiful-eyed.

9. By eschewing Mudga (green grams) in Cāturmāsya the enemy dies. By eschewing Rājamāsa (a variety of beans) one acquires plenty of wealth. By eschewing rice (from meal) one acquires horses.

10. By eschewing fruits, one begets many sons. By eschewing oil one gets handsome features. By abandoning *Tuvarī* (a variety of Dāl, called *Tūr* in Marathi) one becomes wise and intelligent and always gets strength and virility.

11. By eschewing venison one averts the sight of Naraka. By abandoning the flesh of boar one shall attain residence in Brahmā's abode.

12. By eschewing *Lāvaka* (quail) one gets knowledge and great happiness by eschewing *Ājya* (clarified butter). If anyone abandons *Āsava* (liquor), salvation is not inaccessible to him.

13. By eschewing gold and silver a man becomes powerful. One who abandons curds and milk shall enjoy happiness in Goloka.

14. One becomes Brahmā by giving up *Pāyasa* (milk pudding); Maheśvara by abandoning *Kṣīprā* (condensed milk); Kandarpa by abandoning *Apūpa* (fried pie) and very happy by abandoning *Modaka* (sweetmeat).

15. A person who abandons domestic hermitage and resorts to an external hermitage for the delight of Hari, shall never be an infant in the womb of a mother.

16. One becomes a king by abandoning *Marīca* (pepper); an excellent poet by giving up *Śuṇthī* (ginger); one becomes honoured by kings by abandoning *Śarkarā* (sugar).

17. By abandoning jaggery and pomegranate great pros-

perity is obtained. One becomes a favourite of people by eschewing red cloth.

18. One shall attain everlasting heavenly pleasures by abandoning woven silk. By abandoning cooked *Māṣa* (pulse) and *Caṇaka* (Bengal gram) one averts rebirth.

19. A black cloth should be abandoned always and especially in *Cāturmāsya*. By viewing the Sun one attains purity from looking at blue cloth.

20. One attains the Gandharva-world by abandoning sandal. By eschewing camphor one remains extremely rich throughout the life.

21. By abandoning *Kusumbha* (Safflower) one does not see Yama's abode. By abandoning *Keśara* (saffron) a man becomes favourite of a king.

22. By abandoning *Yakṣakardama* (mixture of scents, camphor etc.) one is honoured in Brahmaloḥa. By eschewing flowers one becomes wise. There is great happiness as a result of the eschewal of bed.

23. If one abandons bed during *Cāturmāsya*, one never meets with separation from his wife. There is no doubt about it. By abandoning false and disagreeable words, the doorways of salvation become open.

24. Exposing other's vulnerable and weak points brings in sin immediately. In *Cāturmāsya*, when Hari is asleep, one should avoid censuring others.

25. Slandering others causes great sin. Censuring others involves great fear. Censuring others causes great misery. There is no greater sin than that.

26. Even as one who listens to (censuring of others) becomes a sinner, so also one who censures incurs great sin. There is no other greater sinner than he.

27-28. By eschewing brushing and embellishing tresses of hairs one becomes rid of the three kinds of *Tāpas* (distresses). One who retains the nails and hairs, particularly when Hari is asleep, attains the benefit of the holy ablution in *Gaṅgā* everyday.

29. Viṣṇu should be propitiated by all means. He is worthy of being meditated upon by Yogins and the most excellent ones among all castes. One is liberated from the terrible bondage by the name of Viṣṇu. He is particularly remembered in *Cāturmāsya*.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSEVEN

Greatness of Vrata

Nārada said:

1. When are these do's and don't's to be observed in the vicinity of Viṣṇu? I am not fully satisfied by imbibing the nectar of your speech.

Brahmā said:

2. On the day of Karkasaṅkrānti (during the transit of the Sun to the zodiac of Cancer) a devotee should duly worship Viṣṇu and offer Arghya with splendid Jambū fruits.

3. The name of our continent, Jambūdvīpa is derived from this fruit. O great Brāhmaṇa, the following Mantra should be recited by those who have piety, self-control and faith:

4. "If within the next six months, I am to meet with death anywhere, I now dedicate my own soul to Vāsudeva." The *Arghya* is to be offered with this above Mantra.

5. Then, at the advent of Cāturmāsya that gives great happiness to all the people, one should agree to follow pre-scriptions (of Niyama etc.) and prohibitions (of acts, eschewing of articles of food etc.) in the presence of Hari.

6. *Vidhi* (do's) is what should be performed in accordance with the injunctions of the Vedas. By *Niṣedha* (prohibition) is meant *Niyama* (restraint). These two, *Vidhi* and *Niṣedha*, are Viṣṇu himself.

7-8. Hence by making every effort, Janārdana should be resorted to. He who performs everything such as the adoration of Viṣṇu, narration of stories of Viṣṇu, meditation on Viṣṇu and bowing to Viṣṇu, enjoys salvation through the pleasure (favour) of Hari.

He who does all these out of love and devotion to Hari becomes the enjoyer of liberation (*Mukti*). Viṣṇu is a personified form of *Varṇa* (Caste) and *Āśrama* (Stages of life). He is the eternal truth.

9. During Cāturmāsya, one should perform the Vrata that dispels the pain of births etc. Hari alone should be resorted to by way of Vrata that is performed physically. When the Lord,

the storehouse of austerities, is asleep, this physical body should be purified by means of austerities.

Nārada said:

10. What is called Vrata? What is called Tapas? O Brahmā, recount in detail what that Vrata is that should be performed by me and that yields great benefit.

Brahmā said:

11. Know that Vrata is an observance pertaining to Viṣṇu prompted by devotion to Viṣṇu. *Tapas* is the practice of abiding by piety such as the rites of Kṛcchra etc.

12. Listen, at the outset, I shall tell you the greatness of Vrata. That Vrata where the resolute adoption of celibacy is the essence is the most excellent Vrata.

13. Celibacy is the essence of austerity. Brahmacharya yields the greatest benefit. In all the holy rites one should develop the practice of celibacy.

14. By the power of Brahmacharya, Tapas grows stronger. There is no greater and more excellent means of piety than Brahmacharya.

15. During Cāturmāsya in particular, when the Lord is asleep, this great Vrata is always supreme in quality in the world. Understand this, O Brāhmaṇa.

16-17a. He who performs this holy rite pertaining to Nārāyaṇa, is not smeared (with sins). They say that there are three hundred sixty days in a year. During that period Lord Nārāyaṇa is adored by those who adopt the Vrata.

17b-22. They resolve: "O Lord, I shall perform such and such a holy rite." That Vrata during the period when the Lord is asleep, they say, has excellent efficacy. The following good Vratas (should be adhered to): *Homa* in the sacred fire, devotion to Brāhmaṇas, faith in piety, (auspicious) intellect, association with the good, adoration of Viṣṇu, truthfulness in speech, mercifulness in the heart, straightforwardness, sweet speech, perpetual interest in good conduct, recitation of the Vedas, refraining from stealth, non-violence, modesty, bashfulness, forbearance, mental and sensual control, absence of greed, freedom from anger, *Nirmoha* (absence of infatuation or delusion), *Amamatā* (eschewal of sense of possession),

disinterestedness, knowledge pertaining to the Vedic rite, absolute dedication of the mind and movements to Kṛṣṇa. O excellent one among the knowers of Brahman, he who has all these excellent qualities in his Vratas, is never smeared with sins. Such a man is said to be a *jīvanmukta* (liberated while alive). A Vrata performed even once yields great benefit always.

23-26. Adoption of celibacy etc. is especially recommended during *Cāturmāsya*.

If *Cāturmāsya* is spent without the adoption of a Vrata, those men's piety is futile. This has been proclaimed by good people conversant with truth.

The Practice of Vratas, even of short duration, yields great benefits to all the Varṇas. If performed in *Cāturmāsya* it gives happiness. Viṣṇu is seen everywhere by men engaged in the Vratas. When *Cāturmāsya* arrives one should assiduously keep it up.

27. Resort to Viṣṇu, the unborn Virāt (Supreme Absolute) who is identical with the Brāhmaṇas, holy fire, Tīrthas and the different branches of the Vedas. With his favour one reaches the (shade of) the great tree of salvation. So he does not endure the scorching distress that arises from the blazing sun of worldly existence.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYEIGHT

Importance of Penance

Brahmā said:

1. O great Brāhmaṇa of great intellect, listen to the details of *Tapas* (austerities) which, if listened to during *Cāturmāsya* destroys sins.

2. Continuous performance of the worship of Viṣṇu with sixteen kinds of services¹ constitutes *Tapas* (penance). Hence

1. There are called '*Upacāras*': Āvāhana, Āsana, Pādya, Arghya, Ācamaniya, Snāna, Vastra, Yajñopavita, Gandha, Puṣpa, Dhūpa, Dīpa, Naivedya, Tāmbūla, Dakṣiṇā, Pradakṣiṇā, For details see HD V. i. 33-36. Some of there were in vogue since Vedic times.

when the Lord of the universe is asleep it (such worship) is cited as a great penance.

3. A regular performance of the five Yajñas is indeed Tapas. The same in the course of *Cāturmāsya* with due dedication to Hari, is a great Tapas.

4. Approaching the wife during the prescribed days after menstrual period by a householder is no different from Tapas at any time. If it is practised during *Cāturmāsya* with due dedication to Hari's pleasure, it is a great Tapas.

5. Truthful utterance in the case of living beings is a rare Tapas on the earth at all times. The same maintained well when the Lord of Devas is asleep yields infinite benefit.

6. Continuous maintenance of non-violence and other qualities is Tapas. Eschewing all enmities during *Cāturmāsya* is a great Tapas. The devotee should be liberal-minded (too).

7. A man should perform worship of 'Pañcāyatana' (the five deities: The Sun, Goddess, Viṣṇu, Gaṇapati and Śiṃṣa) which is a great Tapas. It should be performed with great love and devotion to Hari (to propitiate Hari) in the course of *Cāturmāsya* in particular.

Nārada said:

8. What is denoted by the term *Pañcāyatana*? What is its connotation? How should the adoration be performed? Mention it in detail quickly?

Brahmā said:

9. During the adoration at dawn and at midday Ravi (Sun-god) should always be worshipped in the middle. At night the Moon shall be in the middle. He should be worshipped with splendid colourful flowers.

10. One should worship Heramba (Gaṇapati) in the South-East corner for the purpose of quelling all obstacles. Especially during *Cāturmāsya* he should be adored with red sandalpaste and red flowers.

11. Occupying the South-West the Lord (Viṣṇu) dispels the arrogance of the wicked and always carries out the task of destroying the enemies of a householder.

12. A wise man should always worship Viṣṇu occupying the South-West corner. He should adore him with sweet scents,

sandalpaste, flowers, and very splendid Naivedyas (food offerings).

13. For the abundance of sons and grandsons the Daughter of the Mountain (Pārvaṭī shall always be adored in the North-West corner by learned ones. She should be worshipped with flowers charming the mind.

14. Lord Rudra is always adored in the North-East with white flowers, for the purpose of preventing premature death and dispelling all defects.

15. These five deities constituting the Pañcāyatana are always adored by householders. Its greatness has not been written (recorded) by Brahmā and others but it reigns supreme.

16. This *Tapas* should always be performed. When performed during Cāturmāsya it yields great benefit. During all *Parvan* days (festival occasions) gifts should be made. It is a permanent *Tapas*. Performed during Cāturmāsya in particular, it becomes infinite (in benefit).

17. It should be understood that *Śauca* (purity is of two types: external and internal. Cleaning with water is the external one and purification through faith is the internal one.

18. Curbing of the sense-organs should be practised. It is the greatest feature of *Tapas*. Cessation of fickleness of the senses during Cāturmāsya will be the greatest *Tapas*.

19. By controlling the horses in the form of sense-organs, one can augment one's happiness. The same horses (sense-organs) going astray cause one to fall into Naraka along with the vital airs.

20. One should curb the atrocious she-alligator in the form of *Mamatā* (feeling of ownership) after rebuking it. *Tapas* alone increases the weightiness of men always particularly in Cāturmāsya.

21. This *Kāma* (lust) is a great enemy. One should vanquish it alone steadfastly. Those who have conquered *Kāma* are noble-souled ones. The entire universe is conquered by them.

22. The conquest of *Kāma*, the victory over wishful volition is always the root of *Tapas*. It is the very root of *Tapas*.

23. That alone is the greatest wisdom, by which *Kāma* is vanquished. The same in Cāturmāsya they call as the greatest *Tapas*. It yields excellent benefit.

24. Covetousness should always be eschewed. Sin stands involved in greed. Its very conquest is Tapas, especially in Cāturmāsya.

25. *Moha* (infatuation) and *aviveka* (indiscrimination) should be assiduously avoided always. A man without it is sensible and wise. None can be prudent by succumbing to infatuation.

26. Conceited ardour (*Mada*) alone is the greatest enemy of men. It is firmly rooted in the physical frame of man. It should always be restrained, especially when the Lord is asleep.

27. *Māna* (Jealous anger) resides in all living beings. It is frightening. One should suppress it by means of forbearance. The practice thereof during Cāturmāsya is superior in virtue.

28. A wise man should overcome *Mātsarya* (envious spite) which is the cause of great sin. If it is overcome in the course of Cāturmāsya it is as though all the three worlds along with the immortal ones have been conquered by him.

29. Even the sages who have conquered the sense-organs, if overwhelmed by egotism, abandon the path of righteousness and commit blunders involving moral turpitude.

30. By eschewing egotism one should always attain happiness. Especially if it is avoided during Cāturmāsya, it yields great benefit.

31. This indeed is the root of *Tapas* that it is eschewed from the mind. When all these base qualities are eschewed, one shall become identical with Brahman.

32. At the outset one should practise *Prājāpapatya* for the purification of the body. At the time of the sleep of the Lord of Devas in particular, it is a great *Tapas*.

33. A man who devoutly observes fast on alternate days always during the period of sleep of Lord Hari, never goes to Yama's abode.

34. During the time of Hari's sleep, a man should observe *Ekabhakta* (taking in one meal per day) everyday. For each day he will get the benefit of twelve days.

35. During Cāturmāsya if a man strictly adheres to vegetarian food, he will get the merit of thousands of Kratus. There is no doubt about it.

36. During Cāturmāsya a man should always perform Cāndrāyaṇa Vrata every month. It is impossible to extol adequately his merit.

37. If a man of pure intellect or a woman endowed with faith performs Pārāka Vrata when the Lord is asleep, it destroys the sins of a hundred births.

38. He who resorts to the expiatory rite of Kṛcchra when Lord Janārdana is asleep, shall shed off a heap of sins and attain the status of Gaṇa in Vaiṣṇava.

39. He who engages himself in *Taptakṛcchra* when Lord Janārdana is asleep, shall get a son or excellent reputation and shall thereafter, attain *Sāyujya* (merging) with Viṣṇu.

40. If an embodied soul clings to milk diet during Cāturmāsya, thousands of his sins get dissolved.

41. If a man remains calm and eats sparingly during Cāturmāsya he sheds off all his sins. He attains the Vaiṣṇava region.

42. A man who takes food only once (a day) is never overwhelmed by ailments. One who does not take pungent and saline foods never becomes a sinner.

43. One who takes food in the course of these four months with Hari in view, certainly becomes rid of great sins.

44. One who abides by the diet of roots and bulbous roots redeems himself and the ancestors from the hideous Naraka and resides in the same world as that of Viṣṇu.

45. One who takes in only water during Cāturmāsya undoubtedly attains the benefit of a horse-sacrifice every day.

46. If a man endures cold and rain during Cāturmāsya for the sake of Hari's pleasure, the Lord of the universe gives his own self to him.

47-52. A great Tapas has been cited named *Mahāpārāka*. By undertaking fast for a month, everything becomes complete. It begins from the day of sleep of the Lord (i.e. eleventh day in the bright half of Āṣāḍha) and ends with *Pavitra Dvādaśī*.

The period beginning with *Pavitra Dvādaśī* and ending with *Śrāvaṇa Dvādaśī* is glorified as the second Mahāpārāka.

The period beginning with *Śrāvaṇadvādaśī* and ending with *Āśvina Dvādaśī* is cited by learned men as the third Mahāpārāka.

If a man or a woman devoutly performs any one of these *Mahāpārākas* he or she is the eternal Viṣṇu himself. This is cited as the greatest Tapas of all.

53. It is very difficult to perform. It is very rare in the

world. During Cāturmāsya it is superior to a Makha (performance of sacrifice). For each of its days the benefit of ten thousand Yajñas is incurred.

54. This great Tapas if performed duly yields benefits rare in the world. This alone is highly meritorious. This alone is the great happiness. Resorting to *Mahāpārāka* is highly beneficial.

55. Even if he commits great sins, still Nārāyaṇa dwells in his body. He gets perfect knowledge. He becomes a soul liberated while still living.

56. Sins roar, Narakas torment, and thousands of Māyās flourish only until a devotee becomes an *Upavāsaka* (one who undertakes fast) for a month.

57. If any one gets as his guest a person who has observed fasts during Cāturmāsya, he shall become free from sins, even if he commits thousands of murders.

58-59. A man who recites this, one who reads this always himself, shall be on a par with Vācaspati (Preceptor of Devas). He will undoubtedly get this benefit.

60. This is very ancient and highly sacred. If one listens to this or extols this it causes purification. One who dies mentally remembering Nārāyaṇa attains immortality and excels all Suras.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYNINE

Efficacy of Adoration, Penance etc.

Nārada said:

1-2. How is the rite of adoration performed by means of the sixteen Upacāras? What are those sixteen Upacāras during the days of sleep of Hari?

O Patriarch, even as I ask you, kindly tell me in detail. With your favour, I can become worthy of being honoured by the entire world.

Brahmā said:

3. Everything here (in the world) has its root in the Vedas

and the Vedas are (themselves) the eternal Viṣṇu. So devotion to Viṣṇu shall be firmly based on the injunctions of the Vedas and scriptural texts.

4. Those Vedas have Brāhmaṇas as their support. Brāhmaṇas esteem the sacred fire as their deity. A Brāhmaṇa worshipping the Lord always consigns Āhuti into sacred fire.

5-7. One who is always engaged in the worship of Viṣṇu, holds up and sustains the entire universe. Remembered and meditated upon, Nārāyaṇa especially destroys pains, miseries etc., during *Cāturmāsya* when Hari occupies the aquatic form. Cereals and grains grow out of water for providing satisfaction to the worlds.

Cereals (grain) having thus become a part of the physical form of Viṣṇu are conceived as Brahman. That cereal should therefore be offered to Viṣṇu with due invocation.

8. (Having offered Anna thus) one can avert the possibility of being assailed by the impressions of the previous births, pains, old age and the like.

Formerly the Veda was single when it originated from Ākāśa (Ether, the cause of sound).

9. Then R̥gveda gained the appellation Yajus and Sāman resulting in the prosperity (of everyone). Formerly the Veda was called R̥gveda and the Yajus was called Sahasraśīrsan.

10. The great Sūkta (beginning with the word *Sahas, aśīrṣā*) consisting of sixteen Ṛks is wholly identical with Nārāyaṇ. By reciting it alone, the sin of Brāhmaṇa-murder is destroyed.

11. A learned Brāhmaṇa should at the outset perform *Nyāsa* (Ritualistic touching of parts of one's body as mentioned in the Smṛtis.) Thereafter (it is to be repeated) in front of an image particularly before Śālagrāma stone.

12-14. Thereafter in due order he should perform *Āvāhana* (Invocation) and other rites. He invokes the *Sakala* (one with attributes) form stationed in the Vakuṇṭha region. He has the refulgence of ten million Suns and shines due to the Kaustubha jewel. Clad in yellow garment he is armed with a staff. He has a tuft of hair and a sacred thread. He is a great Sannyāsin. Especially in *Cāturmāsya* one should meditate upon Viṣṇu of such form, who dispels flood of sins.¹

1. Henceforth the sixteen *Upacāras* are associated with each Mantra of the *Puruṣasūkta*.

15. With the first Rk (of the *Puruṣasūkta*) uttered with *Omkāra* in the beginning, he should invoke (Viṣṇu in front of him in the pose of meditation, O excellent Brāhmaṇa).

16. *Āsana* (Seat) is offered with the utterance of the second Rk (of *Puruṣasūkta*). The Brāhmaṇa is to be accompanied by his *Pārṣadas* (followers). The devotee should conceive mentally (the offers of) golden seats for these *Pārṣadas*.

17. Ponderance with due devotion makes it complete (the actual offer of *Upacāra*). *Pādya* (water for washing the feet) should be offered with the utterance of the third Rk. A learned man shall remember Gaṅgā on that occasion.

18. *Arghya* should then be offered to Viṣṇu (uttering the fourth Rk) by means of the rivers and the seven oceans (mentally conceived). Then *Ācamana* should be offered to the Lord of the universe through *Amṛta* (Nectar).

19. It is said that a Brāhmaṇa becomes purified (internally) through three *Ācamanas*. The water should be natural without foams and bubbles.

20. The Brāhmaṇas and other twice-born ones shall become purified as the water touches (respectively) the heart, the throat and the palate. A woman and Śūdra (become purified) if the water is touched once at the extremity.

21. The *Ācamana* is offered with a devout mind by uttering the fifth Rk. Hṛṣikeśa should be won over through devotion. Thanks to the devotion, he offers his own self.

22. Then the ablution of the Deva is carried out by means of scented waters where all types of medicinal herbs have been put. The remaining waters shall be in golden pots.

23. Waters of the Tīrthas are brought mentally with perfect faith. Even a heap of jewels offered without faith shall be futile.

24. Even water offered with faith is capable of giving infinite benefit. Especially during *Cāturmāsya*, a man is sanctified through faith.

25. The ablution is performed with the utterance of the sixth Rk. There is another *Ācamana* to be offered after (the ablution). Then the devotee should offer two cloths accompanied by gold in accordance with his capacity and devotion.

26. The whole of the universe is covered with cloth if Hari is covered with a cloth. Especially in *Cāturmāsya*, the gift of cloths yields great benefit.

27. A further *Ācamana* is offered to the ascetic in the form of Viṣṇu, O leading sage. The offer of cloth to Viṣṇu is to be made with the chanting of the seventh Ṛk.

28. *Yajñopavīta* (sacred thread) is to be offered with the utterance of the eighth Ṛk. Listen to it with the basis of the soul on the mental planes. It is refulgent with its brilliance of ten million suns (hot) to the touch.

29. If a Brāhmaṇa is overwhelmed with anger it (the sacred thread) has the lustre of ten million lightning streaks. With the association of the Sun, the Moon and Fire it has thrice the splendour.

30. The three worlds are in the form of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra and pervaded by the Trayī (Vedas). He is called Dvija, O leading Brāhmaṇa, by whose power the worlds are so pervaded.

31-34a. A man is no better than a Śūdra at his birth. He is called a Brāhmaṇa (Twice-born) due to the consecration. The ability to curse and to bless, the states of being angry and pleased and the status of being the foremost in all the three worlds occur only in a Brāhmaṇa. There is no other kinsman on a par with a Brāhmaṇa. There is no one equal to a Brāhmaṇa in all the three worlds. If a sacred thread is given to a Brāhmaṇa when Lord Janārdana is asleep, the whole universe becomes Brāhmaṇical. There is no doubt about it.

34b. Excellent unguent should be offered to the Yajñamūrti (Representative of Lord Viṣṇu) with the utterance of the ninth Ṛk.

35. Indeed the entire universe is satisfied and refreshed and rendered fragrant with reputation by that person who smears Viṣṇu, the preceptor of the universe, with the excellent *Yakṣakardama* unguent.

36. A man who makes the gift of sandalpaste resembles the Sun by his lustre in this world. After attaining the state of Deva, he rejoices in Brahmāloka and other worlds.

37. Men who view Viṣṇu rendered graceful by smearing with sandalpaste especially during *Cāturmāsya* never go to the city of Yama.

38. The adoration with flowers as well as with devotion is to be accompanied by the chanting of the tenth Ṛk. Lakṣmī always resides in flower.

39. No defect clings to Lakṣmī though she habitually goes everywhere, just as Viṣṇu pervading everything is not assailed by defects.

40-42. So also Lakṣmī who pervades everything does not become deficient in chastity.

Worship with flowers is enjoined always in the case of all idols and all living beings, human beings, Devas and Pitṛs. Everything in the universe beginning with Brahmā and ending with a blade of grass is worshipped by him who adores only Hari along with Śrī (Lakṣmī). Hence one should always worship Viṣṇu with very white flowers.

43-45a. Especially during *Cāturmāsya* a devout householder should always be pure and worship Viṣṇu with white flowers. O Brāhmaṇa, if the adoration with flowers is well performed with devotion he will attain without obstacles whatever he desires. If others also worship and bow to Viṣṇu covered with flowers they too will have everlasting worlds. The benefit is more, if the same is performed during *Cāturmāsya*.

45b. Incense should be offered to the ascetic representing Hari, with the utterance of the eleventh Rk.

46. The Mantra: "Let this incense be accepted. It is the divine juice of a Vanaspati (plant, vegetation). It smells sweet. It has excellent scent and is worthy of being smelt by all the Devas."

47. One should always offer the splendid incense arising from *Aguru* (agallochum) to the Lord. It yields great benefit during *Cāturmāsya*.

48. When the Lord is asleep, O excellent one, it should be offered along with camphor, sandal leaves, sugar, honey and Māmsī-jaṭā (a medicinal twig).

49. Devas are satisfied through inhaling and the incense is splendid and it captivates the nose. The offer of Dīpa (light) is to be made by those who wish for salvation, with the utterance of the twelfth Rk.

50-51. There is a Purāṇic Mantra: "*Dīpa* (Lamp, Light) is the Lord of the luminous ones. In all the rites it is the foremost. *Dīpa* is conducive to the destruction of the columns of darkness. *Dīpa* amits lustre. Hence may Janārdana be pleased with me through the offer of *Dīpa*." This Purāṇic Mantra along with the Vedic Ṛk, if wholly employed while offering *Dīpa*, shall quell sins.

52. If anyone offers *Dīpa* during *Cāturmāsya* before Hari, the mass of his sins shall be burnt in a moment.

53. Sins roar only so long, a sinner fears only so long, as a refulgent *Dīpa* is not offered in the abode of Nārāyaṇa.

54. Merely by seeing the *Dīpa*, a man shall attain all the Siddhis.

55. Whatever may be the wish in view of which one offers *Dīpa* unto Hari, it is fulfilled without hindrance. If the same is offered when the infinite Lord is asleep, it has more good effects.

56. *Dīpa* offering made during *Cāturmāsya* to the five deities presiding over the Pañcāyatana accords great benefit.

57. Viṣṇu alone, when meditated upon, worshipped, and eulogized, always becomes pleased and gives salvation. For the sake of salvation excellent men should offer whatever they keenly desire and whatever splendid thing they have in their house.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTY

Devotion Explained

Brahmā said:

1. A *Dīpa* offered to Hari is superior to my *Dīpa*. He who offers it shall reside in Vaikuṇṭha and he will not like to covet my affluence.

Nārada said:

2. This *Dīpa* offered and placed in the abode of Viṣṇu with the recital of relevant Mantras by men gives excellent benefit always. How can it be more so in *Cāturmāsya*?

Brahmā said:

3. Viṣṇu is the permanent presiding deity unto me. Viṣṇu is always worthy of being adored by me. I always meditate upon Viṣṇu. Indeed Viṣṇu is greater than I.

4. Dīpa, a favourite of Viṣṇu, is the remover of sins always. Especially during Cāturmāsya, it causes the fulfilment of desires.

5. O dear son, Viṣṇu is so much delighted and satisfied through the offering of a Dīpa that he does not grant boon even on thousands of Yajñas performed.

6. With a very little amount spent over a *Dīpa* men derive infinite benefit. (If that is offered) when the Lord lies down on Ananta there is no limit to the amount of Puṇya (merit) acquired.

7. Hence if one offers a *Dīpa* to Hari with the feeling of oneness with all souls along with faith, one is not defiled by sins.

8. If the offering of a *Dīpa* is made to Hari who has assumed the form of a *Yati* (a recluse) with all the sixteen modes of worship, it is as good as the entire universe is lit up.

9. O Brāhmaṇa, subsequent to the offering of a *Dīpa*, food offering is to be made, while chanting the thirteenth Ṛk devoutly, by men standing (as if) at the threshold of Mokṣa.

10. It is this food offering by a householder that even Devas desire to the exclusion of Amṛta and they always flock together at his doorstep.

11. Especially when Hari is asleep, *Arghya* with fruits brought for the occasion, should be offered everyday by men to propitiate Viṣṇu.

12-14. One should offer *Arghya* with great devotion along with betel leaves, excellent arecanuts, grapes, mangoes, walnuts, Dāḍima fruits, Jambū fruits and *Bijapūra* fruits (pomegranates). O leading Brāhmaṇa, with the recital of this Mantra the devotee should take water in a conchshell and place the fruit thereon and offer it unto Keśava. After offering food, *Ācamana* should be offered.

15. *Ārtikya* (Waving of lights) that quells all sins, should then be performed with the recital of the fourteenth Ṛk. Then the devotee bows down to Viṣṇu in the form of an ascetic.

16-18. With the recital of the fifteenth Ṛk the devotee

shall walk around in all the directions along with the Brāhmaṇas (i.e. circumambulation is performed).

By offering water to Hari, devotees of Viṣṇu obtain that benefit which is obtained by offering the waters of the seven oceans.

O leading Brāhmaṇa, if the devotee walks around (circumambulates) four times it is as though the entire universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings is traversed. That itself constitutes pilgrimage etc.

With the recital of the sixteenth Rk, the devotee, the most excellent one among those conversant with Yoga, shall think about Sāyujya (identity) with the deity.

19. The devotee thinks about the identity of himself with Hari. At that time he shall not think about the idol or the physical form. The deity becomes visible due to being of both corporeal and non-corporeal form.

20. When that is seen, all activities pertaining to *Sat* and *Asat* (Real and Unreal) stop. The devotee should think about himself having the refulgence of the Sun in the centre of all luminaries.

21. Always thinking within himself that he is Viṣṇu the devotee acquires Vaiṣṇavī (pertaining to Viṣṇu) body. The Brāhmaṇa shall become a liberated soul while still living.

22. Especially during Cāturmāsya, a Brāhmaṇa should possess (practise) *Yoga*. This is cited as devotion to Hari, the bestower of the path of salvation.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYONE

Characteristics of a Good Śūdra

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thus the worship of Viṣṇu with sixteen types of service has been narrated to you. If a Brāhmaṇa acts according to it, he shall obtain the greatest region.

Similarly excellent salvation is attained by Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas by doing it in that manner. Śūdras have no right thereof and women never at all.

Kārttikeya said:

Tell me in detail about the duties of Śūdras and women. Without the worship of Kṛṣṇa, what means will be available to them to attain salvation?

Īśvara said:

4. Even *Sacchūdras* (good Śūdras) should not ponder over Vedic word. They must not directly hear it nor should they recite it. By reading it, he will incur the risk of falling into hell.

5. He should never recite or listen to Purāṇas. What has been mentioned in the Smṛtis, should be understood by him from an excellent preceptor. But neither recitation nor regular listening is allowed.

Skanda said:

6. Who have been called *Sacchūdras*? Mention them in detail. Who are the *Sats* (excellent men)? Who are the Śūdras who have been named *Sacchūdras*?

Īśvara said:

7. He who has married his wife as per Dharma (legitimately) is cited as *Sacchūdra*. His wife should be of his own community, of the same caste and matching him in complexion and features. She should be free from the ten defects.

8. If the marriage has been celebrated in accordance with the injunctions of the Vedas, he is glorified as *Sacchūdra*. She should have no manifest characteristics of eunuch (barrenness). She should have no deficiency of limbs. She should not be affected by any grave ailment and the like. She should be of esteemed features.

9. She should have splendid features. She should be without eye ailments, deafness and blemishes worthy of censure. She should be a virgin of sweet speech and without fickleness.

10. She should not have the ten defects. She should have been duly married by the kinsman in accordance with the injunctions of the Vedas. Such a wife of his will be an ideal housewife for ever.

11. He should be known as Sacchūdra. She duly offers their shares to the Devas etc. In all the sacred rites it is she who is glorified at the outset.

12. A sacred rite decently performed by her yields the full benefit. What he performs alongwith her, especially in Cāturmāsya has more virtues (merits).

13. He should be lovingly devoted to his wife. He should be clean. He should be eagerly engaged in looking after the welfare of his servants and others. He should regularly perform Śrāddhas etc. He must maintain *Iṣṭa* and *Pūrta* rites (Yajñas and services unto the community).

14. Devas become pleased within for repeating the holy names and reciting the Mantra that ends with the word 'obeisance' (*Namah*) when he performs the auspicious rites of Pañcayajña etc.

15. He should not fail to take holy bath, should offer libations, perform Homa without chanting Mantras, perform Brālma Yajña and adoration of guests. These five constitute *Pañca Yajñas*.

16-17. The Pañcayajña should be performed by women and Śūdras without reciting the Mantras. Piṭṛs and Devas are always as much pleased with the service rendered by a chaste lady to her husband as they are pleased by means of the Pañcayajñas. Indeed, all the Devas reside in the body of a chaste woman.

18. Hence, the enjoinder of Dharma etc. in the case of them both, is of the same type. Piṭṛs and Devas are pleased when their opinion is asked. (*obscure*)

19. The association of all the rites etc. is always permanent. At the advent of Cāturmāsya they both will attain happiness through devotion to Viṣṇu. (*obscure*)

20. If anyone holds (keeps) a wife born of the same caste, it is the earlier husband who partakes of the moiety of benefit and not the second. (*obscure*)

21. She has the right to all economic rites. Therefore, she gets half of Dharma. In the case of both, their Karma, auspicious and inauspicious, done individually is whatever they do.

22. Only she who follows her dead husband by dint of her excellent austerity, should be regarded as *Sādhvī* (a chaste woman). The family is redeemed by her.

23. If the dead husband belongs to another caste, whether she had been kept (as a concubine) or is really married, she redeems that husband through the path of Vaiśvānara (Fire)—self-immolation in fire.

24. Just as moss is pulled out from water by righteous men, so the chaste lady who follows her husband redeems him.

25. If a woman is born of another caste or if a woman is kept (as a concubine) by a man of another caste, both of them (the two persons) are considered to be excluded in holy rites.

26-27. In regard to a man who carries on his own duties the benefit is yielded by a good action. Hence, whether excellent or mean, a lady from a noble family (*Satkula*) should not be made a keep. What that wife does, does not flourish. The merit performed along with her flourishes later ten times.

28. Similarly, what is done by her son does not yield infinite satisfaction.

A girl who was bought by paying the price is cited as a *Dāśī* (Slave).

29-32. She does not come under the jurisdiction of a *Sacchūdra*.

A girl who is married off and given to an excellent groom by the father himself, she who has been married in accordance with the injunctions regarding marriage is one who accomplishes the rites concerning the *Putr*s and *Devas*.

She of excellent characteristics who is modest and splendid with the good qualities of discrimination etc., one whose conduct is good and who is devoted to her husband deserves to be given to them (befitting husbands).

A girl born of a pure family, who is given in marriage as per religious precepts (taken in marriage) and who practises Piety (*Dharma*) sanctifies the entire family of mother as well as father.

This alone is the greatest procedure of *Sacchūdras*. It has been narrated by me.

33. If a girl is born of an inferior caste, she is considered as one born of a lower order than that of a *Sacchūdra*.

In regard to those people, the marriage rite is of ten types and the status of the sons is also of ten types.

34. O excellent sage, four are mentioned as excellent forms of marriage. The remaining (forms of marriage) are

stated (as applicable to or found in) all types of people by knowers of the ancient traditions.

35-36. The four excellent types of marriage are *Prājāpatya*, *Brāhma*, *Daiva* and *Āṣa*. The (six types viz.) *Gāndharva*, *Āsura*, *Rākṣasa*, *Paiśāca*, *Prātibha* and *Ghātana* are mentioned as the types of marriage of men of low caste. Thus the ten types of marriage have been enumerated.

37-38. The sons are remembered as of ten types viz *Aurasa*, *Kṣetraja*, *Datta*, *Kṛtrima*, *Gudhotpanna*, *Apavidha*, *Kānina*, *Sahoḍha*, *Kṛta* and *Paunarbhava*¹. Though the others are lower than *Aurasa* they are of splendid characteristics.

39. There are eighteen types of disposition in regard to the low ones. They have no special procedure, rite or path of *Smṛti*.

40. In regard to them the following good actions are always prescribed—service to *Brāhmaṇas*, meditation on *Viṣṇu*, adoration of *Śiva*, performance of holy rites without the recital of *Mantras* and *Dāna* that should be always given.

41. If a religious gift is made with perfect faith, that is never wasted in the world. A gift made without faith and in an unclean manner is the cause of enmity.

42. Holy rites beginning with non-violence prescribed in their cases yield great benefit particularly in *Cāturmāsya* through the service of the Lord of *Devas*.

43. Virtue and piety is resorted to by *Sacchīdras* who perform service etc. of *Brāhmaṇas*, *Dāna* and meritorious rites, who never become antagonistic and who are very pleasing to view.

44-45. Business dealings can be based on truth as well as falsehood. A money-lender should appropriate eighty per cent of the interest (for his own use). In regard to *Kṣatriyas* and others one fourth increase is allowed. In this manner he will never incur sin at all.

46. The morning rites are those of (worship etc. of) the Lords of *Suras*. At midday *Brāhmaṇas* are to be served. In the afternoon a man can pursue his own personal activities. Thus the man shall become happy.

1. All these have been mentioned earlier and explained.

47. All householders should always, throughout their lives, be engaged in holy rites of Pañcayajñas and the adoration of guests and Brāhmaṇas.

48. They must always be engaged in devotion to Viṣṇu and chanting of the Vedic Mantras. They should be habitually devoted to charity and rendering service to the distressed and wretched ones lovingly.

49. They must possess the good qualities of forbearance etc. They must adore repeating the twelve-syllabled mantra *om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*. They must revel in the bliss of repeating the six-syllabled Mantra *om namaḥ śivāya*.

50. They must beget good children. Their conduct must be good, they must serve good people. They should be free from jealousy. They must remain always relieving the distresses and pains (of others).

51. They must not practise Sannyāsa (renunciation). *Sacchūdras* should be devoted to pious activities. They must delight all living beings in accordance with their affluence.

52. Those men who are always devoted to Viṣṇu, Śiva etc. especially during Cāturmāsya sport about in heaven like the Devas.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYTWO

Eighteen Prakṛtis (Castes and Sub-castes)

Nārada said:

1. O grandfather, what are the eighteen Prakṛtis (castes and sub-castes)? Tell me. What is their avocation? What is their duty? Tell me everything in detail.

Brahmā said:

2. I was born from the inside of a lotus grown from the navel of the Lord when the Lord of the universe woke up at the end of his self-calculated measure of time.

3. After a lapse of a great deal of time formerly, I was remembered by Keśava who desired mentally to create various types of Rājasic progeny.

4. I became his four-faced son born of the lotus. Through the hollow stalk of the lotus at his navel, I entered his belly and surveyed.

5. Thereupon, millions of cosmic eggs came within my view. Again I reflected with wonder and began to hasten for the activity of creation.

6. By the time I came out through the hollow stalk of the lotus, everything pertaining to the process of creation was forgotten by me.

7. Again I went in as before and created the four types of subjects. I came out through the hollow stalk at the navel and my innermost soul sank into obliviousness.

8. I became sluggish and insentient as it were. An unembodied speech issued forth, "O highly intelligent one, practise austerity, practise austerity. Sluggishness is not proper for you."

9. Then I performed penance for ten thousand years. Thereafter, the imperishable ethereal voice spoke to me:

10-11. The voice became manifest, due to the power of the penance originally in the form of the Vedas. Thereafter, I was commanded by the Lord: "Create thou, the multiformed progeny." Resorting to the Rājasa Guṇa carry out the creation of living beings devoid of impurity." At the outset, the mental creation was thought about by me.

12. Then Brāhmaṇas (sons of Brahṁā), the leading sage Marici and others were born. You were born as the youngest of them. You became a master of wisdom, well-versed in the Vedāntas.

13. They were steadfast in their holy rites always. They were always ready for the sake of creation. (But you) were free from activities, a devotee of Viṣṇu, solely devoted to Brahman.

14-15. You are my mental son, free from egotism and *Mamātā* (sense of possession).

Gradually, in order to preserve the Vedas the first mental creation of the Dvijas etc., was begun by me. Then, O Nārada, I started the organic (pertaining to body) creation.

16. Brāhmaṇas were born from the mouth of mine and then Kṣatriyas from the arms. Vaiśyas were born from the thighs and Śūdras issued forth from the feet.

17. Further, there was a mingling of these castes in due order from the higher to the lower and contrarily from the

lower to the higher. Thus (castes) lower than Śūdras were born from the sole of the feet.

18. All these are Prakṛtis born out of the parts of mine, O Nārada; learn their names which I shall tell you.

19-23. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya—these three alone are called Dvījātis (Twice-born). The Vedas, their study, penance, sacrifice, worship and Dāna (etc. should be adopted by a Brahmana). His livelihood shall be through teaching and that too with very little remuneration. Thanks to his austerities, a Brahmana may deserve the remuneration. Yet it is better to refrain from accepting it and thus there is the preservation of his power of austerities.

Vedic chanting, adoration of Viṣṇu, meditation on Brahman, non-covetousness, absence of anger, eschewal of impurities, forbearance to the utmost, nobility and magnanimity, promptness to perform holy rites, active indulgence in charity etc., should be adopted by a Brāhmaṇa. He should always be adorned with the qualities of truthfulness etc. He who is thus endowed is called a *Vipra* (Brāhmaṇa). Yajña, Tapas and Dāna should be practised by a Kṣatriya.

24-25. He must chant the Vedas and be devoted to Brahmanas. He maintains (himself) through weapons (military profession). For the sake of protecting women, children, cows, Brāhmaṇas, earth (kingdom) etc. he must wield weapons. When there is a danger to his Lord (kings etc.) he must be active. The very word *Kṣatriya* indicates that he must be a refuge unto the affected ones and protect the distressed ones. Such Kṣatriyas are made by Brahmā.

26-27. A Vaiśya is one who increases capital wealth. He is a farmer and he breeds cattle. He sells *Rasas* (juices) etc. and adores Devas and Brāhmaṇas. Through the interest earned, he causes increase of wealth. He causes people to perform Yajñas and other rites. It is cited that Dāna and *Adhyayana* (self-study) constitute his duties.

28-32a. A Śūdra always causes all these to be carried out but without the utterance of the Mantras. He performs regular Śrāddhas (worship) for six deities. He gives libations by mere utterance of Mantra. Through obeisance he earns devotion to the deities and the twice-born ones.

Even a Śūdra should get up early in the morning and pay respects to the feet (of elders). Reciting verses full of devotion

to Viṣṇu, he shall attain the status of Viṣṇu. It has been mentioned that a Śūdra householder also regularly performs the annual Vratas on the proper lunar days, days of the week and (with the proper) presiding deities. He should offer cooked food to all living beings. Such a Śūdra, performing the holy rites without the utterance of the Mantras, becomes liberated.

Even a Śūdra regularly observing Cāturmāsya Vrata shall attain identity with Hari.

32b-34. The eighteen Prakṛtis (castes with various sub-castes) are as follows: *Śilpin* (artisan), *Nartaka* (dancer), *Kāṣṭhakāra* (lumberman), *Prajāpati* (pot-maker), *Vardhaki* (carpenter), *Citraka* (painter, artist), *Sūtraka* (spinner of threads), *Rajaka* (washerman), *Gacchaka* (tree-feller), *Tantukāraka* (weaver), *Cakrika* (oil-monger), *Carmakāraka* (cobbler), *Sūnka* (butcher), *Dhvaniv* (drummaker), *Kaulhika* (acrobat?), *Matsyaghātaka* (fisherman), *Aunāmika* and *Cāṇḍāla*.

35. The following six are the highest among Prakṛtis: *Śilpika*, *Svarṇakāra* (goldsmith), *Dāraka* (wood-worker), *Kāṁsyakāraka* (brazier), *Kāṇḍakāra* (?) *Kāṇḍakāra* (maker of arrows) and *Kumbhakāra* (potter).

36. The following five are the lowest ones: *Kharavāhī* (donkey driver), *Uṣṭravāhī* (camel driver), *Hayavāhī* (using horse as beast of burden), *Gopāla* (cowherd) and *Iṣṭikākara* (brick-maker):

37. The following seven are the meanest *Antyaajas* (lowest ones): *Rajaka*, *Carmakāra*, *Naṣa*, *Buruḍa*, *Kaivarta*, *Meda* and *Bhilla*.

38-39. If anyone is of a lower caste than another that man is the eighteenth one (unto him). There are three types of all the Prakṛtis: the excellent, the medium (middling) and the *Sama* (equal, low level). This classification is in accordance with the decision of the Smṛtis. It should be known that the seven *Śilpins* (artisans) have been cited as the excellent.

40. Those seven are: goldsmith, *Kambuka*, (conch-shell artisan), *Tandulī* (rice-dealer), *Puṣpalāvaka* (flower-dealer, florist), *Tāmbulī* (betel-leaf merchant), *Nāpita* (barber) and *Maṇikāra* (lapidary, artisan dealing with jewels).

41-42. These Prakṛtis are not subject to injunctions pertaining to: holy ablution, Homa unto the deities, penance and

restraints, self-study of the Vedas, offering oblations to deities, ritualistic cleanliness and marriage rites. But the adoration of the preceptor at all times is necessarily laid down. The greatest of the rites enjoined upon the Prakṛti is making gifts to Brāhmaṇas.

43. O great sage, devotion to Viṣṇu is always auspicious in the case of all Varṇas, Āśramas and all the Prakṛtis (lower castes).

44. Thus, everything pertaining to the Prakṛtis has been narrated to you. Listen to the highly meritorious story how a Śūdra attained purity.

45. This Purāṇa is highly sacred and pure. A person of clear intellect who listens to it or reads it, shakes off all the sins incurred earlier. Engaged in holy rites he attains the abode of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYTHREE

Importance of Śāligrāma Worship

Brahmā said:

1. A Śūdra named Paijavana attained purity through the (performance of) householder's duties without violating the Path of Dharma. Listen to it, O highly intelligent One.

2. Formerly, in Tretā Yuga, there was a Śūdra named Paijavana. He was well-known as strictly adhering to his own pious duty. He was a worshipper of Viṣṇu and Brāhmaṇas.

3. He earned wealth through legitimate means. He was calm and quiescent always. He was a favourite with all people. Truthful in speech, he was a wise man of discrimination.

4. His wife was a beautiful woman. Born of a family equal in status, the splendid woman was taken in marriage by him in accordance with the injunction of the Vedas. The highly esteemed woman was very chaste and was very devoted to the welfare of Brāhmaṇas and Devas.

5. The alliance¹ of that girl was settled at Kāśī and the

1. *Samvādhitā* "brought up in Kāśī" is a better reading than *Sambandhitā*.

marriage was celebrated at Vaijayanti. Efficient in the practice of piety (Dharma), she regularly observed Vaiṣṇava Vratas.

6. Maintaining perfect humility, she sported about with her husband. He too indulged in pleasurable sports with her at befitting occasions like a huge male elephant with a female elephant.

7. He had regular business dealings with his clients of own country as well as of foreign lands.

8. Thanks to the earlier merit, the noble-souled one acquired (adequate) wealth. With the commodities belonging to him as well as to others, he conducted business. Thus he, a practitioner of Dharma, accumulated wealth in various ways.

9. He begot three sons who were happy to render service to their father. All the sons were affectionately disposed towards their father. They were never arrogant due to affluence or otherwise.

10. They strictly acted according to the behests of their father. The excellent sons shone splendidly due to their adherence to their duty and good conduct. They did not like anything other than service to the parents.

11. They were rendered well connected through excellent matrimonial alliances by the father who had excellent insight into Dharma. The wives of those sons adored regularly and unobstructedly the mother and the father.

12. The house was rich and prosperous, fully equipped with wealth and food-grains. He too was devoted to piety regularly worshipping the deities and guests.

13. No one stepping into his house ever went with averted face (disappointed). During winter he made monetary gifts and during summer he gifted water and cooked food.

14-16. During rainy season he gifted garments and on every occasion he gave food liberally. At the proper time he caused wells, ponds and lakes to be dug, free-water kiosks and temples to be made. He observed holy vows of Śiva and Viṣṇu. The pious acts of Iṣṭa (Yajñas etc.) etc., duly performed yield great benefits in the cases of all Vārṇas. He performed *Pūrtas* (acts of community service), befitting the Vārṇas as well as others. Though affluent, he had no vices.

17-18. He was always a great devotee of Viṣṇu, especially so during *Cāturmāsya*.

Once, Sage Gālava came to the abode of this Śūdra Paijavana. The sage was devoted to the knowledge of Brahman, was calm and firmly established in austerities. He had perfect control (over his sense-organs). He came to his abode surrounded by a number of disciples.

19. Rising up and welcoming him with honey-like words, he offered seats and other services, considering himself blessed and contented (thereby).

20-21. "To-day my life has become fruitful and exalted. Today my piety has become fruitful. I am blessed and I have been redeemed by you.

O Sage, thousands of my sins have been burnt down by your mere vision. The entire abode of mine, an humble householder has been sanctified by you."

22. Due to his devotion the tiger among sages became pleased. All his fatigue due to the travel vanished. As the Sacchūdra stood with palms joined in reverence he spoke thus:

23-27. "O gentle one, I hope your mind is inclined towards piety. I hope your kinsmen, wife, sons etc., are fully endowed with adequate wealth.

You have constant devotion to Govinda and it urges you to make gifts. Your mind is inclined to the pursuit of virtue, wealth and love.

Do you or do you not hold on your head always Gaṅgā water, the water flowing from the feet of Viṣṇu, Gaṅgā water yields the benefit of twelve years.

Devotion to Hari, listening to stories of Hari, eulogy of Hari, bowing down to Hari, meditation on Hari and worship of Hari when the Lord is asleep—cause salvation. Especially during *Cāturmāsya*, the benefit thereof shall be twice more."

As the sage said thus, he bowed down to him and said thus:

28-29. "There is no doubt about this that I have acquired the benefit of my stage of life, thanks to your vision. Yet I wish to hear your pure, blemishless speech. The arrival of people like you is capable of yielding all objects (or desires)."

Thus they both rejoiced and become delighted in their hearts.

30-31. Then the honoured *Sacchūdra* named Paijavana said again to the sage: "Tell me kindly what is the purpose of your visit? How can there be the appropriate time for

pilgrimage as Cāturmāsya is about to begin?" Gālava said to the Sacchūdra, the righteous one, truthful in speech:

32-33. "Many months have elapsed since I started taking holy ablution in the Tirthas. Now that Cāturmāsya has arrived, I shall go to my hermitage. On the eleventh lunar day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha, I shall perform the rites and restraints at home for the sake of Nārāyaṇa's delight and my own welfare." So said the sage about his holy rites (to the Śūdra) who had bowed down through humility.

Pañjavana said:

34-35. O eminent sage, speak to me (some) words of wisdom and bless me. I am not authorized to study the Vedas. Nor for the Japa of Gāyatrī which is the essence of the Vedas. I am not to read the Smṛtis or Purāṇas. Hence tell me something that appears to you as ennobling my soul and according me great benefit.

36. Tell me something that is conducive to the achievement of salvation, if performed especially during Cāturmāsya.

Gālava said:

37. Enjoyment of pleasures (and salvation) cannot be far from those men who always worship Viṣṇu in Śāligrāma, the Lord marked by his discus (or Śāligrāma which is marked by discus¹).

38. Whatever auspicious rite is performed (especially during Cāturmāsya) with the mind dwelling on Śāligrāma, shall be everlasting in its benefit.

39. Salvation is not inaccessible to a man who has acquired association with both, viz. a Śāligrāma stone and a Dvārāvātī stone.

40. If the Śāligrāma stone is worshipped by men in a place (house) it sanctifies the place up to five Krośas (5 × 3 Kms.) round that ground, even if the place is full of hundreds of sinners.

41. Indeed this is a mass of luminous splendour. This is

1. Some Śāligrāma stones have discus-like figure inscribed naturally within them.

the auspicious form of Brahman. The very sight thereof is immediately destructive of sins.

42-44. O great Śūdra, all the rivers, all the holy Tīrthas and shrines of deities attain the status of Tīrthas due to proximity to it (Śāligrāma).

All auspicious rites attain the status of holy rites especially during Cāturmāsya by its proximity.

If the splendid Śāligrāma stone is worshipped in house with the tender leaves of Tulasī, Yama averts his face from that house.

45. Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Sacchūdras all are authorised to worship Śāligrāma, and none else.

Sacchūdra said:

46-47. O holy Brāhmaṇa, O most excellent one among those conversant with the Vedas, O Brāhmaṇa expert in all the scriptural texts, it is heard that women, Śūdras and others are prohibited from the worship of Śāligrāma, as in the case of myself. Then why do you say (that I can worship)? If so, tell me the procedure of the worship.

Gālava said:

48. O Dāsa showing respect, understand that the prohibition is in regard to *Asacchūdra*. As for women, the prohibition does not apply to chaste ones.

49. Let there not be any doubt on your part in this matter. You are not getting anything good from doubt. Those who are devoted to the worship of Śāligrāma become endowed with pure bodies and discrimination.

50-53. Those who worship it during Cāturmāsya do not go to the city of Yama.

If men wear on their heads a garland (or flowers) that has been dedicated to Śāligrāma, thousands of their sins get dissolved immediately.

If people offer *Dīpaka* (light) in front of Śāligrāma stone, they never fail to reside in the city of the Sun.

O Mahāśūdra, those who worship Viṣṇu present in the Śāligrāma stone with beautiful flowers when Lord Hari is asleep, men who bathe Śāligrāma with Pañcāmṛta never remain bound to the world.

54. After firmly holding in his heart that Hari, the cause of salvation, present in the Śāligrāma stone, he who devoutly meditates on him attains salvation.

55. If one places on the Śāligrāma stone a garland wreathed with Tulasī leaves especially during Cāturmāsya, he shall attain all that he desires.

56. A garland of flowers is not that dear to Śāligrāma (unless it contains Tulasī). The divine Tulasī is the auspicious favourite of Viṣṇu always.

57. Tulasī is always dear to him (Viṣṇu) especially during Cāturmāsya. Śāligrāma is the great Viṣṇu. Tulasī is goddess Lakṣmī. There is no doubt about it.

58-60. Lord Hari present in the Śāligrāma stone should be bathed with waters rendered fragrant with sandalpaste and Tulasī leaves. The Lord should be adored with bunches of Tulasī flowers. One shall attain all desires thereby.

In the first leaf Brahmā is present and in the second Lord Śiva is present. Lord Viṣṇu is present in its bunch of flowers (Manjari). Therefore, the splendid Tulasī with the bunch and two leaves, should be taken by sensible men.

61-64. If that is devoutly dedicated to the preceptor, it causes the destruction of rebirth etc.

A man who offers a mass of incense to Śāligrāma especially during Cāturmāsya and becomes devoted to Hari, shall never fall into Naraka.

By viewing Śāligrāma worshipped with splendid flowers, a man attains identity with Hari after getting rid of all sins from his soul.

He who eulogizes Viṣṇu present in a Śāligrāma stone found in the water of Gaṇḍakī river, reciting passages from Śruti, Smṛti and Purāṇa shall go to the region of Viṣṇu.

O Mahāśūdra, there are twenty-four varieties of Śāligrāma stones. O highly intelligent one, listen to them.

65. These twenty-four varieties of Śāligrāma should be adored in the world. Their presiding deity is Viṣṇu and I shall enumerate their names.

66. That same Lord, the primordial one, is personified through these twenty-four (forms). He alone is termed Saṁvatsara. That same Lord is present in the stone.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYFOUR

Twentyfour Varieties of Śāligrāma

Pañjavana said:

1. O Ascetic, describe to me these different types in detail. My thirst is not adequately quenched even by drinking the nectar-like utterance of yours.

Gālava said:

2 Listen to the different types in detail¹ as mentioned in the Purāṇas. I shall extol them to you: On listening to them a man shall certainly be liberated from all sins.

3. The first is Keśava to be worshipped. The second one is Madhusūdana. Saṅkarṣaṇa is the third. Then Dāmodara is remembered.

4. The fifth one has the name Vāsudeva. The sixth one has the appellation Pradyumna. Viṣṇu is mentioned as the seventh. The eighth one is indeed Mādhava.

5 Anantamūrti is the ninth one. The tenth is Puruṣottama. Thereafter is Adhokṣaja. The twelfth one is Janārdana.

6 The thirteenth one is Govinda. The fourteenth is Tivikrama. Śrīdhara is the fifteenth, Hṛṣīkeśa is the sixteenth.

7. Nṛsiṃha is the seventeenth. Thereafter is Viśvayoni. Vāmana is cited thereafter. Then Nārāyaṇa is remembered.

8. Then Puṇḍarikākṣa is mentioned. Upendra is thereafter. Hari is the twenty-third and Kṛṣṇa is cited as the last one.

9. O one born of a Śūdra, the different types of Śāligrāma have been named by me to you, O highly affluent one, the different Mūrtis (Godly forms) are also mentioned. These are they themselves.

10. The Mūrtis shall also have the names of the Tithis (Lunar days) called Ekādaśī. They are always worshipped and these twenty-four Mūrtis are worshipped in the course of a year.

11. The incarnations of the Lord are twenty-four in number. The months are those beginning with Mārgaśīrṣa. Halves of the months are termed Pakṣas.

1. The names of Śāligrāmas in vv. 3-8 are the same as uttered after Ācamana at the beginning of Sandhyā.

12. Worshipping them always along with the Adhīśas (presiding deities), one shall become a devotee. The foursome having twenty-four appellations have been cited.

13-14. These foursome grant the Puruṣārthas viz virtue, love, wealth and salvation to men. A man who devoutly listens to it and reads it with concentration is favoured by Hari, the protector of all created living beings.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYFIVE

Devas Go to the Mandara Mountain

Paṇḍavana said:

1. How did the eternal Lord, the primordial cause of the universe, attain the stony state in the form of Śāligrāma in Gaṇḍakī?

2. Explain it to me. O Brāhmaṇa-Sage, with your favour my devotion to Hari shall become steadier. You are the Tīrthas themselves, destroying sins by the mere sight.

3. Just as men attain purity by bathing in a nectar-like Tīrtha, so also I have attained purity by listening to the nectar-like words of yours. There is no doubt about it.

Gālava said:

4. This meritorious legend is cited in the Purāṇas indicating how the Lord attained the stony state of Śāligrāma.

5. O sinless one, I shall tell you how Maheśvara assumed the form of Liṅga. Formerly, Prajāpati (Patriarch) Dakṣa originated from the thumb of Brahmā.

6. He had a daughter named Satī, a chaste girl of excellent features. She was married to Hara in accordance with the injunctions of the Vedas. You know. Hara is well conversant with the proper procedure.

7. Deluded in intellect, he (Dakṣa) performed a great Yajña wherein he exhibited his hatred for Hara. Satī became extremely furious on account of that hatred.

8. She approached the Yajñavedī (Altar). Holding the sacred fire (having fixed her mind on fire) she held her breath

as in Prāṇāyāma, and discarded her physical body.

9. Abandoning the part inherited from her father (i.e. the physical body) and adopting her own part (the Liṅga Śarīra), Satī mentally meditated and proceeded towards the cool Himālaya.

10. Wherever the mind is directed at the time of death, actuated by one's own Karma, the incarnation too takes place there itself. There is no doubt about it.

11. On being burnt the goddess became the daughter of Himālaya. After being born as Pārvatī, she performed a fierce penance.

12. The Daughter of Himavān directed her mind towards Maheśvara and performed the penance on a peak of Himavān. She was regularly devoted to the Vrata of Hara and devout activities pertaining to Śiva.

13. Then at the end of a thousand years, Lord Maheśvara, the sanctifier and creator of all living beings, came to that place in the guise of a Brāhmaṇa.

14. Through the activities and mental feelings well-tested, he knew that she had been purified by means of austerities. He assumed the divine form and held Pārvatī by her hand.

15. (He said:) "I have been won over by means of your penance. What can I do to please You?" Thereupon, she said to Maheśāna, "My father and guardian is the ultimate authority."

16-19. On being told so, Śaṅkara deputed the Seven Sages to hold negotiation with Himavān regarding the marriage alliance. Those sages went there and on being sent back (with assent) by Himavān, informed Maheśāna and went away.

On the day of the marriage, Mahendra and other Devas with Brahmā and Viṣṇu as their leaders kept Agni in front and came there. With splendid *Madhuparka* and other things (for reception) Himavān honoured the bull-emblem Lord in the guise of bridegroom who arrived there along with the Yogins and Siddhas.

He (Himavān) was very glad and he received the Lord with the customary services. He considered himself blessed and contented.

20. Surrounded by groups of Brāhmaṇas, he united his daughter (with Śiva) in accordance with the procedure laid

down in the Vedas and the rite of holding the hand *Pāṇagrahaṇa* (marriage) was performed.

21. Giriśa circumambulated the holy fire. Thereafter, at the time of Dāna (offering of the bride) Hara was asked about his *Gotra* (lineage) etc. when he became ashamed.

22-23. At the instance of Brahmā, the remaining rites were concluded by him (Śiva). In the company of all the Devas, the Lord took some fancy and displayed his five faces at the time of taking in Caru when the bridegroom Maheśvara was urged on behalf of Girijā.

24. On seeing Pārvatī with ninety million faces the people laughed boisterously; (they said:) 'This is the Vedic passage. O Śiva, be firm.'

25. Though ashamed, she did not leave (Śiva) in the course of five births. The lady with black side-glances attained Hara alone as her husband.

26. The entire family of Devas and Mountains (of Himavan and others) became delighted. When the marriage rites were concluded, Hara went to the pleasure house.

27-30. In the presence of the Ganas, Ambikā did not tolerate it. After giving the wedding present the Mountain (i.e. Himālaya) sent him off. On being honoured and received properly, he (Śiva) went to the Mandara Mountain. Then Viśvakarman built a bejewelled chamber in an instant for the sake of the Lord of Devas. It was a palace that could grow in accordance with one's desire. It was equipped with all luxury. Its splendour was praiseworthy. It was adorned with jewels and corals. It had a thousand pillars. It was exquisite with jewel-embedded altars. At the doorway of this palace, Nandin and other Gaṇas kept watch.

31. Each of them was three-eyed and armed with tridents and they had the form of Śaṅkara himself. All round that palace, there was a park where thousands of Pārijāta trees grew.

32-33. Kāmadhenu, the celestial cow, and the divine jewel were at the doorstep. In that enchanting abode that caused love to grow, Śiva was staying along with Pārvatī when Kāma assumed gaseous form and looking at Śaṅkara spoke thus:

34-36. "Obeisance to you, omniformed one; obeisance to you, O bull-emblemmed one. Obeisance to you, the Lord of

Gaṇas. O Lord, protect me. I make obeisance to you.

The earth touches the people bereft of you, as though they are corpses. Nothing is seen excluded from you in the whole world consisting of mobile and immobile beings.

You are the protector. You are the creator and you are the cause of the annihilation of the worlds. O Mahādeva, take pity on me; make to me a gift of physical form."

Īśvara said:

37. O sinless one, formerly you were burnt by me. Re-assume your physical form in front of her facing whom you had been burnt by me on the mountain.

38. On being told thus, Kāma regained his own body. O Śudra, bending down in humility he paid respects to his feet.

39-42. Then the delighted Kāma paid respects to Pārvatī's feet.

Having obtained favour from both of them, he wandered over the three worlds. He had a great refulgence and was fully equipped with the power of fascinating and enchanting.

Then the flower-arrowed, flower-bowed Lord of love with curly hairs and tremulous eyes entered their body.

At the time of intercourse, the female companions went round and served them with divine wines, divine scents, garments, garlands and other things.

Sporting thus, he (Lord Śiva) spent a hundred years and more.

43. Even as the Lord was indulging in the intercourse, the long period of a hundred years passed off like a single night.

In the meantime the Devas, driven away by Tāraka, sought refuge in Brahmā out of fear. Seeking shelter under him, they eulogized him and said thus:

The Devas said:

44. This Tāraka, the highly hideous one, was granted boons by you formerly.

45. With his might, he conquered Śakra. He is now honoured by all the three worlds and he enjoys pleasures. Devise yourself some means, whereby his destruction can be thought about.

Brahmā said:

46. He was granted boons by me. Therefore, he is not to be exterminated by myself. It does not behove anyone to nurture an obnoxious plant and cut it himself.

47-49. Hence, I shall suggest the means of destroying him. A son to be born of Pārvati from the noble-souled Maheśāna, will kill Tāraka when barely seven days old.

On hearing this speech, the Devas who had been afflicted by the Daityas and Dānavas, returned to Mandara, the most beautiful (mountain) in the world.

They all returned from Brahmāloka.

50-51. The Gaṇas beginning with Nandin returned to the doorway of the Trident-bearing Lord and stayed alert there with full mental control. The Devas lost all their splendour with their minds sickened with grief. They abandoned their abodes and all their resorts. When the Lord (Viṣṇu) went to sleep during the four months, they performed a penance that highly propitiated Hara.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYSIX

Pārvatī's Curse on Devas

Gālava said:

1. Śakra and other Lords of Devas became grief-stricken and mentally distressed. Their minds and organs of action became utterly confused because the Lord did not manifest himself.

2. They did not attain (visualize) the Lord. They made an image of the Lord of the worlds though he was present in the hearts of all living beings. They propitiated by means of penance.

3. The ten-handed Lord with matted hairs with a crown wielded in his hands a trident, the Pināka bow, a skull, and a Khaṭvāṅga.

4. The mighty-armed īśāna of five faces, having a body with the lustrous complexion white like camphor and adorned

with white ash, was accompanied by Umā.

5. He had serpents as Yajñopavīta and elephant's hide as garment. The Lord had covered himself with the skin of a black antelope.

6. Resorting to trees there as shelter, the Suras performed their meditation. Doing the strict observance of Vratas, they performed an excellent penance.

7-8. The Suras performed Japa with the six-syllabled Mantra of Śiva.

Śūdra said:

How does one do the observance of that Vrata just now referred to by you? O holy Brāhmaṇa, do narrate it in detail. I am not fully satiated by your nectar-like words.

Gālava said:

9-10. A devotee performs Japa of Śiva characterised with the Bhasma, Khaṭvāṅga, skull, crystal, garland of headless trunks, five faces, crescent moon on the head, garment of variegated colours made of hide, pair of earrings, loin cloth, two bells, trident and sacred thread.

11-13. O Śūdraja (one born of a Śūdra), what has been mentioned by me should be marked with these characteristics. In accordance with this procedure, the Devas with Fire-god as their leader made use of all the means and propitiated the bestower of boons. When *Cāturmāsya* was over and the clear Kārttika month was complete, Maheśvara saw that the Suras had fulfilled their vows and become pure. The Lord, the immanent soul, the witness of all living beings, having become pleased granted them excellent intellect.

14. He became delighted by their Japa of the *Śatarudriya* methodically done, their meditation and the gift of lamps during *Cāturmāsya*.

15-19. He understood that the Devas had come to his place after duly performing devotional activities in regard to Hara as in the case of Viṣṇu. Lord Rudra was pleased thereby and granted them excellent intellect.

Then the Devas took counsel together and eulogized Vahni (Fire-god) properly and made him eager to perform the task with a delighted face.

The highly refulgent *Karmasākṣin* (Witness of all activities, the Fire-god) assumed the form of a pigeon and entered the centre (of the apartment) in order to see Lord Maheśvara. He exhibited diverse kinds of movements crawling and rolling by. The Fire-god of beautiful form moved ahead. He concealed his body and veiled his face. On seeing him there, the Lord understood the reason.

20. The Lord of upflowing semen deposited it in the mouth of Vahni and he flew out of the house.

21. When the bird went away, Pārvatī, the great goddess, realized her endeavour as fruitless and cursed all the Devas in great anger:

22-24. "Since my desire has been frustrated by you all of wicked intellect (I curse you). May all the Heaven-dwellers attain immediately the state of rocks. All the Devas shall be ruthless and devoid of progeny."

Curbed thus, they bowed down and endeavoured to please her. Being excessively grieved they spoke thus repeatedly:

The Devas said:

25. You are the mother of all the Devas. You are the witness of all. You are the eternal one. You are always the cause of origin, maintenance and annihilation of all the worlds.

26. You are in the form of Prakṛti (Ultimate Cause) of all living beings. You are resorted to by all the great elements. You are Aparṇā, the foster mother of all austerities, the mother of living beings, the *Vasundharā* (Holder of wealth, Earth).

27. You can be propitiated through Mantras. You are the seed of the Mantras. You are the seed (cause of origin), maintenance and destruction of the universe. You are the bestower of the fruits of Yajña etc., in the form of Svāhā always.

28. You are the goddess equally endowed with Mantras and Yantras (mystic diagrams etc.) in Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others. You are eternal in form, great in size, omniformed and unsullied.

29. You are the bestower of *Naiśreyasa* (ultimate welfare, salvation) unto the people afflicted by the three kinds of defects. You are Mahalakṣmī, Mahākālī, Mahādevī and Maheśvarī.

30. You are the goddess of the universe, the great Māyā, the bestower of the boon of the seed of Māyā. You are

excellent in form, worthy of being considered excellent, the bestower of boons and the excellent daughter.

31. If men worship you always with splendid and auspicious Bilva leaves you grant them all their desires; you bestow on them kingdom and all Siddhis.

32. You have yourself become the *Kāmadughā* (the wish-yielding divine cow) for the purpose of fulfilling their desires in the case of those who worship you in *Cāturmāsya* especially with Bilva leaves.

33. Misery and sin will never befall them who, out of great devotion in this world, always worship you along with Meheśvara by means of Bilva leaves.

34-35. Especially during *Cāturmāsya*, worship unto you grants great fruit. Ever since now if you are worshipped by the people by means of Bilva leaves, O Maheśānī, you will grant them excellent knowledge. O lady of excellent countenance, Bilva leaf yields more benefit during *Cāturmāsya*.

36. What is given for the delight and satisfaction of Umā and Maheśvara duly is of everlasting benefit. Just as Śrī resides in the Tulasī plant so Pārvatī resides in the Bilva plant.

37. You appear as the universe by means of your form. You are the bestower of all desires. During *Cāturmāsya* in particular if both of you are served you two grant great benefit.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYSEVEN

Greatness of Aśvattha Tree

Paṇḍava said:

1. In what way is Śrī in the form of Tulasī, and how is Pārvatī present in the Bilva tree? O Sage, do narrate this in detail. O holy Sir, do tell me the truth.

Gālava said:

2. Formerly, in the battle between Devas and Asuras, the terrible Dānavas, hideous in form and haughty due to their prowess killed Devas.

3-5. Devas became agitated due to fear and sought refuge

in Brahmā. After bowing down to their father (i.e. grandfather) all the Devas with Bṛhaspati as their leader eulogized him and stood with palms joined in reverence. Pitāmaha spoke to them: "Why have you come to my abode with pale faces? You have come along with Vahni, Indra and the Vasus. May the reason thereof be told immediately?"

The Devas said:

O dear father, we have been defeated in the battle by the Daityas of wonderful feats.

6. All of us have been overwhelmed (with defeat). Hence, we have sought refuge in you. O Lord of the chiefs of Devas, save us who have sought refuge in you.

7. On hearing it, Lord Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, said: "It is not possible for me to take the side of any group of people.

8-10. I shall suggest a means to be placed before you all who have taken resort to excellent Dharma (righteousness).

Once devotees of Śiva had a great dispute. They quarrelled with the devotees of Keśava. They wanted to gain victory over one another. Thereupon, even as his devotees were watching, Lord Rudra assumed a wonderful form with an idea of bringing about peace with the Gaṇas of Viṣṇu. With the halves of each body he assumed the form of Hari-Hara.

11. With the half of a body, he became Hara and with the other half Viṣṇu. He had the symbols of Viṣṇu on one side and those of Hara on the other.

12. On one side there was Vainateya (Garuḍa) and on the other side there was the Bull. The body on the left side had the lustre of a cloud and was comparable to a heap of (black) stones.

13. On the right side it was white like camphor. Similar to the unity of the two, there was unity in every part of the universe.

14. Ideas of difference opposed to the intent of Śruti and Smṛti vanished. The hypocrites, the sceptics and the heretics felt dismayed.

15. They abandoned their separate ways and proceeded ahead along the path of salvation. That form on Mandara, the most excellent one of the mountains, was always eulogized.

16. That infinite form is the seed of the universe. It is the cause of creation, maintenance and annihilation. Even today it remains steady along with the Pramathas and other Gaṇas.

17. The form wherein Maheśa and Viṣṇu are united is destructive of sins when remembered.¹ It is worthy of being meditated upon by Yogins and adored always. Though it is the basis of the Sattva (Guṇa or living beings) it is beyond all the Gaṇas (attributes).

18. By meditating on it those who desire salvation attain the greatest region. If a man meditates on it especially during *Cāturmāsya*, he becomes superhuman.

19. To those who go there that Lord makes arrangement for (the accomplishment of) everything."

After saying thus to them the Lord vanished there itself.

20. Those Devas too beginning with Vahni went to the Mandara mountain. They wandered here and there seeking Maheśvara.

21. They sought Pārvatī stationed in Bilva tree and Lakṣmī present in Tulasī.

Formerly, at the outset the entire universe was full of trees.

22. All these trees were great and excellent. All of them originated from the parts of the Lord. One is liberated from all sins by the very touch of these.

23a. Especially during *Cāturmāsya* they remove clusters of great sins.

23b-24. When the Devas did not see the Lord of the three worlds, an ethereal voice spoke to the Devas truthfully. "Out of compassion for all the living beings, Īśvara has stationed himself on this tree.

25. At the advent of the *Cāturmāsya*, he shows mercy on all living beings. Hence Aśvattha tree should be resorted to always and particularly on a Saturday.

26-27. By constantly touching the Aśvattha every day, sin gets split into a thousand pieces. If the devotees offer libation with milk or sprinkle devoutly with gingelly seeds mixed (with it) that causes salvation to the ancestors. Sin perishes by the very sight of the tree.

1. For the cult of 'Hari-Hara' see G.V. Tagare: '*Śaiva-darśana*' (pp. 226-229). Their identity is found on the coins of Huvishka (106-138 A.D). Instruction for making such a joint icon are given *Matsya* P. 269.22.27. Their identity is preached in other Purāṇas also e.g. *Kūrma* I 15.89-91.

28. Pippala, if worshipped, seen, resorted to, is conducive to the destruction of sins and ailments. It is especially so during *Cāturmāsya*, *Aśvattha* duly watered and adored causes happiness to all living beings.

29a. It quells all ailments and all sins.

29b-33. If men glorify the name itself of the *Aśvattha* tree, they will never have the fear of the world of Yama on their way (to the other world).

He who profusely applies Kumkuma and sandalpaste to it (*Aśvattha*) will never suffer from the three types of distress. He will attain the state of a Gaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha.

O Pippala, O favourite of Hari, do destroy evil dreams, wicked anxieties, sins and the attack of pernicious fever. If Devas worship Pippala uttering the Mantra, Dharmarāja (god of Death) shall become obedient to their orders.

If even the word '*Aśvattha*' is uttered it bestows knowledge on men.

34. If it is heard it removes sin incurred ever since the birth and until the death.

Resorting to *Aśvattha* is meritorious, especially during *Cāturmāsya*.

35. When asleep, the powerful Lord resorts to the middle of the tree and appears to drink the entire quantity of water present on the earth.

36. The water is Viṣṇu himself. In the form of water, Viṣṇu himself is the great Rasa (bliss, juice). Hence Viṣṇu present in the tree during *Cāturmāsya*, is destructive of sins.

37. Viṣṇu, present in all the living beings, promotes the welfare of the universe.; he who bows to Viṣṇu present in *Aśvattha* shall never fall into Naraka.

38. If any man remains pure and grows a seedling of *Aśvattha* on the earth, thousands of his sins perish instantly.

39. *Aśvattha* is the most sacred of all the trees. It is attended with all auspiciousness. It accords salvation. If meditated upon and grown during *Cāturmāsya* it is destructive of sins.

40. If anyone places his foot on an *Aśvattha*, he incurs the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. If, without any reason, it is cut or trimmed, one is certainly cooked (tortured) in Naraka.

41. Viṣṇu is always present at its root. Keśava is always present in the trunk. Nārāyaṇa is present in the branches and Lord Hari is in the leaves.

42. There is no doubt that Acyuta is present in its fruit, accompanied by all the Devas: If anyone worships the tree, especially during *Cāturmāsya*, he attains salvation.

43. Hence Aśvattha should always be resorted to assiduously. If a man does so devoutly, a sin incurred by him on that day, perishes.

44. Viṣṇu is the tree itself. It is the form of Viṣṇu. Its meritorious root is resorted to by noble souls. He who has the tree as his support destroys thousands of sins of men. He is the yielder of desires. He possesses all the good qualities.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYEIGHT

Greatness of Palāśa Tree

Vāṇī said:

1-4. The Palāśa tree is served in the form of Hari by persons conversant with ancient lore. Worship of the *Brahma Vṛkṣa* (i.e. Palāśa) should be carried out with many types of services. It is mentioned as the bestower of all desires and destructive of great sins.

There are three leaves in the Palāśa (bunch, or twig). The middle one is adjoined by Viṣṇu. On the left side is Brahmā and on the right is Hara. This has been proclaimed (by ancient seers).

An excellent man who always takes food on a Palāśa leaf undoubtedly obtains the benefit of a thousand horse sacrifices. Especially during *Cāturmāsya* it causes salvation to him who eats on it.

5. This tree if adored regularly with milk or water on Sundays during *Cāturmāsya* facilitates a devotee to attain the greatest region.

6. If after getting up early in the morning Palāśa is seen by men they shall shake off Narakas quickly and attain the greatest region.

7. Palāśa is the basic support of all the Devas. It is a means of acquiring Dharma (merit). Whatever man may covet, this great tree should be worshipped for realizing it.

8. Just as Brāhmaṇa is the most important person among all castes, so also the *Brahmavṛkṣa* (Palāśa) is the most excellent one among all the trees.

9-14. At its root Hara is always present. Śuladhara (Trident-bearing One) himself is present on its stem. Lord Rudra is in the branches. Tripura-slayer is present in the flowers. Śiva is present in the leaves and Gaṇapati in the fruit. The Lord of Gaṅgā is in the bark and Lord Bhava in the pith-marrows. Īśvara is present in the twigs. The whole tree is a favourite of Hara.

Hara is white like camphor and is duly extolled always. So also the highly esteemed (tree) in the form of Brahmā is white in colour.

If it is meditated upon, it is conducive to the destruction of enemies and quelling of sins.

Undoubtedly it is conducive to the bestowal of desires.

On a Thursday in *Cāturmāsya* if it is adored, eulogized or meditated upon it destroys all miseries.

15. The absolute Brahman has attained the state of the *Brahmavṛkṣa*. It is worthy of being eulogized by the Devas. It is the seed (source) of the Devas. It is in the form of Sthāṇu and should be served always. If it is served during *Cāturmāsya* it shall quell sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYNINE

Greatness of Tulasī

Vāṇī said:

1. Undoubtedly there can never be poverty in the house of that householder by whom the excessively beneficial Tulasī is planted.

2. By the mere sight of Tulasī a heap of sins gets destroyed. Tulasī, very dear to Hari, originated from drops of nectar for the sake of Śrī.

3a. While (Śrī) was drinking the exquisite beverage Tulasī originated. It quells the sins of all living beings.

3b-4. Lakṣmī always resides in its figure; the Ocean-born One (*Sāgarasāmbhavā*) resides on its stem. Śrī dwells always in the leaves. Kamalā herself resides in its branches. Indirā is always present in the flowers. *Ṛṣirābdhisāmbhavā* (Lakṣmī born of the Milk Ocean) is present in the fruit.

5. She is present in the form of *Viśvavyāpinī* (Pervader of the universe) in the dry twigs of Tulasī. *Padmavāsā* resides in the pith and *Haripriyā* in the bark.

6. It is omniformed and goddess of all, bestower of the greatest bliss. A man who eats Tulasī never goes to the world of Yama.

7. He on whose head there is Tulasī, is not assailed by Yama's men. It bestows the status of salvation on a person who has Tulasī in his mouth.

8. He who has Tulasī in his hand is rid of the three types of distress. If Tulasī is in the chest (heart) of living beings, it grants all desires.

9. He who has Tulasī on his shoulders is never touched by sin. He who has Tulasī round his neck always is a living liberated soul.

10. A man who holds (carries with him) a Tulasī leaf always, shall undoubtedly attain whatever he wishes (to have) mentally.

11. Tulasī facilitates the attainment of all objectives and restrains wicked ones. A man who waters it daily never goes to the abode of Yama.

12-18. If it is saluted especially during *Cāturmāsya* it bestows salvation.

On coming to know that Nārāyaṇa resides in water as well as on the tree (*Aśvattha*), Lakṣmī resorted to the plant (Tulasī) out of compassion for all living beings.

At the advent of *Cāturmāsya*, if Tulasī is resorted to (by people), thousands of their sins are split into thousands.

Remembering Govinda always, resorting to a park of Tulasī plants, sprinkling Tulasī plants with milk is rare during *Cāturmāsya*. If a man nurtures Tulasī plant with faith and waters by filling a baṣin made round its roots the family is sanctified.

Just as Śrī stationed in Tulasī increases daily so also (the attainment of) the desires of the householder increases.

Whether a religious student, or a householder or a forest hermit or an ascetic or all types of Prakṛtis (castes and subcastes) if they are engaged in serving Tulasī with faith, Hari will ward off their miseries.

19. Hari though single pervades all plants. His form is meditated upon as permeated by various Rasas (juices). So also Kamalā, the goddess, took up residence on a tree (Tulasī) destroying miseries etc., on being remembered always.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTY

Creation of Bilva Tree

Vāṇī said:

1. It is not possible to extol adequately the greatness of Bilva leaves. O Mahendra, I shall tell you accurately. Listen to it.

2. The splendid Daughter of the Mountain; the goddess, became tired due to her sports. Drops of sweat appeared on her forehead.

3. They were wiped off by Bhavānī and a drop fell on the ground. It became a great tree on the excellent mountain Mandara.

4. Once again, the Daughter of the Mountain came to that place in the course of her sports. On seeing a tree in the forest, she was surprised. It was evident from her eyes that beamed.

5. She asked her female companions Jayā and Vijayā: "What is this great divine tree shining in the centre of the forest? It appears very beautiful. Indeed it gives great delight."

Jayā said:

6. O goddess, this tree has originated from your own body, from a drop of your sweat. Do name this tree soon. If it is worshipped, it destroys sins.

Pārvatī said:

7-11. Since this excellent great tree pierced through the

ground and rose up near me, let it be named Bilva.

If anyone approaches this tree devoutly and collects the leaves, he shall certainly become a king of the earth.

If anyone with perfect faith worships me with its leaves, he will realize whatever desire he may cherish.

If a person, after seeing the leaves of Bilva, at least maintains faith in the rite of adoration, I shall undoubtedly be the bestower of wealth on him.

If anyone makes his mind to eat the tip of the leaves, thousands of his sins perish automatically.

12. If a man places the tip of the leaf on his head, no torture of Yama will give him pain.

13. After saying thus, the delighted Goddess Pārvatī went to her abode accompanied by her companions and Gaṇas.

Vāṇī said:

14. This Bilva tree is very excellent, sacred and destructive of sins. There is no doubt about this that Goddess Girijā resides at its root.

15. It is remembered that Dākṣāyaṇī is present on its stem Maheśvarī on its branches, Goddess Pārvatī on its leaves and Kātyāyanī on its fruit.

16. Gaurī has been mentioned as present on its bark, Aparṇā at the middle of the bark, Durgā in the flower and Umā in the branches and twigs.

17. At the behest of Girijā, nine crores of Śaktis have stationed themselves on all its thorns for the sake of protecting living beings.

18. They worship her by means of the excellent leaves. They adore the eternal goddess. Whatever desire is cherished will be certainly realized.

19. Maheśvarī, the daughter of the Mountain, is a great goddess. She is pure in form and she bestows salvation on people. On Seeing Hara resorting to Palāśa she created the physical form of Bilva playfully.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYONE

Curse to Viṣṇu

Gālava said:

1-3. After saying this, the ethereal voice (Vāṇī) that granted auspiciousness stopped. The Devas observed that great miracle and (decided to perform) the great Vratas.

At the advent of Cāturmāsya, O Śūdra-born one, Devas duly worshipped the four trees with the feeling of identity among them.

After the Cāturmāsya was concluded the delighted Lord appeared in the visible forms of Hari and Hara (fused into one), thanks to their devotion, and spoke thus:

4. "O Lords of Devas, O eager (sincere) observers of the great Vrata, do go now. Enjoy your respective positions as authorised. Those Dānavas have been killed by me."

5. After saying thus, the two Lords of Devas in their united form prompted the intellect of the Gaṇas and Devas to repudiate the difference.

6. Thanks to this non-difference, the Lords became suppressors of the enemies and Devas became delighted in their minds on being rid of obstacles.

7-8. They went back to their respective places of authority by means of crores of aerial chariots.

Gālava said:

There too the Devas continued to have the delusion due to the curse of Pārvatī. They eulogized and adored the great goddess by means of Bilva leaves. They repeatedly bowed down to the goddess of smiling face on being eulogized.

9-12. Thereupon, the mother of the universe, who was eulogized, spoke to the Devas: "O excellent Suras, of course my curse cannot go in vain.

Yet I shall take pity on you despite your commission of sins. O excellent Suras, in the heaven you will not become converted into stone.

Descending to the mortal world, you will be converted into icons wholly. All of you Devas shall then be capable of being the bestowers of boons on people.

The progeny of those boys and girls united in wedlock shall be your progeny too without doubt."

13. After saying this the goddess who bestowed boons on the Devas angrily spoke to Viṣṇu and Maheśvara (see vv 15 and 16).

14. On being afraid of her, the Devas vanished and became idols in the mortal world. They remained well-established there causing the fulfilment of the mental desires of their devotees.

15-16. "Since, O Viṣṇu, Maheśāna was not forbidden by you, you will undoubtedly become a stone.

Hara too will attain the form of a stone despicable to the people, in the shape of Liṅga due to the curse of the Brāhmaṇas and will endure great misery."

17. On hearing it, Lord Viṣṇu bowed down by way of appeasing Maheśvarī, the wife of Hara and said:

Śrī Viṣṇu said:

18. "O supreme goddess of great Vratas, you have always been the beloved of Mahādeva. You alone are (the great Śakti) abiding in Sattva and Rajas—the excellent Śakti of Tāmasic nature.

19. You are endowed with the three Mantras. You have evolved the three Guṇas. You have created Māyā and others. Your form pervades the universe.

20. You are eulogized by the three Vedas. You are endowed with attachment (Rāga) in the form of Sādhya (One who should be realized by means of spiritual endeavour). You are formless and omniformed too. You bestow progeny upon people.

21. You are the Phalavelā (the time of fructification). You are Mahākālī, Mahālakṣmī and Sarasvatī. O goddess of Suras, you alone are Omkāra and Vaṣaṭkāra.

22. Obeisance to you, O mother of living beings. Obeisance to you, O Śivā, Rāgiṇī and Virāgiṇī (passionless). Obeisance, O splendid one, O one of frightful form."

23. On being eulogized thus, the goddess with eyes beaming with pleasure, with a heart filled with delight, spoke these exalted words though uttered in pretended anger:

24. "O Janārdana, my curse will never be otherwise. In your case too, it is so. Stationed there too you will be the bestower of salvation on leading Yogins.

25-26. You will fulfill the cherished desires of the devotees, especially in Cāturmāsya.

There is a river named Gaṇḍakī. It is the beloved daughter of Brahmā.¹ The river bestows merit and has plenty of water. It has originated from Pāṣāṇasara (the mountain of hard stones²). Your residence shall be in its very pure waters.

27. Your stones have been observed in twenty-four types by those conversant with ancient lore. At the opening thereof, there is gold. It is glorified as Śālagrāma stone.

28. It is a circular (globular) mass of refulgence. You will be endowed with Śrī and you will possess ability for everything. You will accord salvation even to the Yogins.

29. You will bestow every Siddhi thought of by the devotees, the men who will worship you, Viṣṇu present in the stone.

30. If men with eagerness and devotion adore with Tulasi the Lord of the Devas present in the Śālagrāma stone, salvation is not far removed from them.

31. He who sees you, Viṣṇu present in the statue of Śālagrāma stone, Viṣṇu marked in every limb by the excellent discus, shall never go to Yama's abode."

Gālava said:

32. Thus everything connected with Śālagrāma has been narrated to you as to how that Lord Viṣṇu got the state of the stone.

33. After receiving the great (terrible) curse, Govinda went back to his abode. Pārvatī too who had been rendered furious made Maheśāna bow down (She went to her abode).

1. According to *Varāha Purāṇa*, the source of the river was the drops of sweat dropped from Viṣṇu's cheek (*Gaṇḍa*) while performing penance. The river rises in the Dhāvalagiri range of Himalayas (called *Sapta-Gaṇḍaka*)
2. These stones (pebbles) are found near a place called Śālagrāma near the source of Gaṇḍaka. Formerly there were the hermitages of Bharata and Pulaha (De, 60). It was believed that gold was found within these pebbles. The "discus" is a freak of nature caused by the rubbing action of water on the stones.

34. Thus that Lord, creator of everything past, present and future, and maintainer and destroyer of all—even he with Śrī and Bhava (Śiva) with the Daughter of the Lord of Mountains, stayed in the four trees.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYTWO

Greatness of Trees

Śūdra said:

1-2. This is a great miracle that Suras stand in the form of trees. At the advent of Cāturmāsya they reside in all the trees. O holy Sir, who are those Suras? Which Sura resides in which tree? Do narrate this to me in detail with a desire to bless me.

Gālava said:

3. They call water Amṛta (Nectar). During Cāturmāsya, the deities of the trees drink it as they please when it is gracefully held (and offered) by the Devas.

4. By drinking it, they are satisfied much. There is no doubt about it. They derive strength, refulgence, splendour, perfection and quickness of gait.

5. All these good things result from imbibing the liquid arising from a part of Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu). By drinking the everlasting Amṛta, some strength is obtained.

6. They praise that food (water) for ever. There is no doubt about it. Hence they drink water alone during the four months (Cāturmāsya).

7. The deities and Pitṛs residing in the trees drink the water with a desire for the welfare of all living beings.

Resorting to trees always in all the months is excellent.

8. If resorted to especially during Cāturmāsya, they cause all happiness.

Sprinkling trees with water mixed with gingelly seeds, yields all desired objectives.

9-10. Kṣīravṛkṣas (trees exuding milk-like juice) should be sprinkled with water mixed with milk. They bestow auspiciousness.

The four trees mentioned earlier by me bestow all desires especially during Cāturmāsya.

Brahmā resorts to Vaṭa (Banyan) and grants boons to living beings.

11. He has the association of Sāvitrī as well as the sacred gingelly seed white in colour and also an ornament. When the Lord is asleep, the service done with gingelly seeds is particularly highly beneficial.

12. Gingelly seeds are unparalleled in sacredness. Gingelly seeds facilitate the achievement of piety and wealth. Gingelly seeds give salvation too. Gingelly seeds dispel sins.

13. Gingelly seeds bestow special benefits. Gingelly seeds are destructive of enemies. Gingelly seeds are cited as the first among all meritorious things.

14. They say that gingelly seeds are no ordinary grain. They are remembered as divine grain. Hence, of all gifts, the gift of gingelly seeds is the greatest and most excellent.

15. O son of a Śūdra, if gingelly seeds are gifted along with gold by anyone it amounts to the destruction of sins like Brāhmaṇa-murder by him.

16. Sāvitrī and gingelly seeds are mentioned as promoters of all tasks and objectives. One should offer libation with gingelly seeds, especially during Cāturmāsya.

17. Seeing gingelly seeds is meritorious. So also is touching them, performing Homa with them, eating them and smearing the body with them (as paste).

18. In every respect, this gingelly plant is destructive of sins by its mere sight. If it is resorted to especially in Cāturmāsya it bestows all happiness.

19. Mahendra dwells in *Yava* (barley) and is engaged in the welfare of living beings. Resorting to *Yava* is meritorious. So also is its sight and touch.

20. One should offer libation with *Yava* grains. If it is offered to deities, it has everlasting benefit.

All the Prajāpatis (patriarchs) dwell in *Cūta-vṛkṣa* (mango tree).

21. Gandharvas occupy *Malaya* tree (Sandal tree). Gaṇanāyaka occupies *Aguru* (Agallochum). The oceans occupy *Vetasa* reed. *Yakṣas* occupy *Punnāga* tree.

22. Nāgas occupy *Nāga* (betel) tree; Siddhas *Kaṅkola* tree;

Guhyakas *Panasa* tree (jack fruit tree) and Kinnaras resort to *Mañca* (pepper creeper).

23. Kandarpa has resorted to *Yaṣṭimadhu* (sugarcane?) plant. Vahni (Fire-god) stands resorting to the great tree *Raktāñjana*.

24. Yama presides over *Vibhītaka* (*Terminalia* belerica); Nairṛtādhipa occupies *Bakula*, Varuṇa *Kharjūrī* tree (date palm) and Maruta *Pūga* tree.

25. Dhanada (Kubera) occupies *Akṣoṭaka* tree; Rudras, *Badarī* tree. *Mahātāla* (palms) belongs to (occupied by) the Saptarṣis (Seven Sages). *Bahula* (cardamon, indigo plant) is chosen by the immortal ones.

26. *Jambū* tree is surrounded by clouds. It is dark in colour and is destructive of sins. It is like Kṛṣṇa in colour. Hence, *Jambū* is the most excellent one among trees.

27. If the fruits thereof are gifted, Vāsudeva becomes pleased. People should feed Brāhmaṇas at the foot of a *Jambū* tree.

28. Hari becomes pleased with them and he bestows all the four Puruṣārthas (aims of life). At the advent of Cāturmāsya when Lord Janārdana is asleep, devotees are expected to feed Brāhmaṇas.

29. He who remains clean and feeds Brāhmaṇa couples, becomes the favourite of Nārāyaṇa, the consort of Lakṣmī.

30. A man can become blessed and has his objects achieved if he and his wife (adore Brāhmaṇas) for the satisfaction of Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa after adorning them with splendid ornaments and robes.

31. If a Brāhmaṇa is fed with *Jambū* fruits he gets the benefit of feeding them for three nights with the fruits of Vaṭa and Aśoka.

32-33. On that day he shall have only *Ekaḥukta* (one meal). He shall be contented thereby.

Why should much be said? By worshipping *Jambū*, one undoubtedly becomes rich with sons, grandsons and wealth.

Jambū is surrounded by clouds and Aśoka by lightning.

34. The great tree *Priyāla* is accepted by Vasu, *Japā* tree by Ādityas and *Madana* by the Āsvins.

35. *Madhūka* tree is accepted by Viśvedevas, *Gaggulu* by Piṣitāśanas (demons). *Arka* is adopted by Sūrya (Sun), the pure one. *Tripatra* (*Palāśa* tree) is adopted by Soma, the sacred one (Moon, Śiva).

36. *Khadira* is adopted by the Son of the Earth (i.e Mars), *Apāmarga* by Budha, *Aśvattha* by Guru (Bṛhaspati) and *Udumbara* by Śukra.

37. Śamī has been adopted by Śanaīścara (Saturn) and Śūdra castes. Dūrvā suitable for offering libation to Pitṛs has been adopted by Rāhu.

38-40. It is always a favourite of Viṣṇu and especially so during Cāturmāsya.

Darbha that is highly beneficial and befitting Yajñas has been adopted by Ketu. Without Darbha no auspicious rite can become complete. It is the most sacred of all sacred things and the most auspicious of all auspicious things. It is a great plant standing on the earth. It has the form of salvation in the case of those about to die. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva always stay therein.

41. They stay at the root, in the centre and on the top. Its name too gives satisfaction. The other Devas too occupy those trees.

42. The great trees function undoubtedly during the four months with the help of these trees.

During Cāturmāsya all the wives of Devas resort to the creepers.

43-44. If they are served (resorted to), they grant men their cherished desires.

Hence if one resorts to Pippala, it is as good as all the trees have been resorted to especially during Cāturmāsya. If the Tulasī plant is served it is as good as all the creepers have been served.

45-46. The entire universe beginning with Brahmā and ending with a blade of grass has been served and developed well.

If it is served by a householder or a retired man, or a bachelor or a recluse during Cāturmāsya it grants salvation. One shall not cut off any of these trees.

47-48. Cutting during special occasion of Yajña is permitted.

Except on these occasions the trees mentioned earlier should not be cut.

Thus everything I was asked by you has been described by me.

O son of Śūdra, you had asked as to how all the Devas adopted the trees.

49-50. By seeing these (trees) one will never see Naraka: One Aśvattha, one Picumanda, one Nyagrodha, ten Tittiḍis (tamarind) and the set of three viz. Kapittha, Bilva and Āmalakī. All the Devas occupy all the trees. They have Kṛṣṇa as their support, Kṛṣṇa in the centre and Kṛṣṇa at the top. He is that Lord who is worthy of being adored by the entire universe and if he is adored and served all the world becomes satisfied.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYTHREE

Śaṅkara Consoles Pārvatī

Śūdra said:

1-2. Goddess Pārvatī had got infuriated. How was she pacified by the Trident-bearing Lord after being cursed? How did it happen that Lord Rudra whose fury makes the universe agitated, got the curse from his wife? How did he get the hideous form and how did he regain the divine form?

Gālava said:

3. Due to their excess of fear of the goddess, Devas took invisible forms and stationed themselves in statues all over the mortal world.

4. The highly esteemed mother of the universe, the destroyer of sins, was eulogized by Viṣṇu. She became pleased and she blessed all the Devas:

5. Due to their strength, but restrained by the weight of Pārvatī's curse, the Lord tried to pacify her always. She said to Śaṅkara:

6. "With my favour these Devas worthy of being adored by all and devoutly propitiated by men will be the bestowers of boons on all.

7-11. (*Corrupt text*) This act censured by good people has been committed by you against me and no one other than you will do this. At the time of the marriage, on the altar, obviously witnessed by all, you have done this, namely taking of seven steps, grasping the hand etc. in the assembly of the people

in front of these viz. Vahni, Varuṇa, Kṛṣṇa and the Devas and their wives. When the Devas and Brāhmaṇas were present in all the quarters you have done this. Due to mistake, how have you strayed away? If even the elders behave like the common people, they are to be restrained by the people enlightened in all the worlds. This is heard in a Śruti. A father should be chastized by even a son. A preceptor himself can be chastized by a disciple

12-13. A Brāhmaṇa should be admonished by a Kṣatriya and a husband by a wife. A most excellent one may be a master of the Vedānta but if he traverses wrong path, he has to be chastized even by a baser one. So says the eternal Śruti. Everywhere it is the path of the good that is respected everywhere but nowhere is the wrong path honoured.

14. He by whom the traditional practice of his family is abandoned, shall be a fallen man. On death, he falls into hell and is overwhelmed by the weight of misery.

15. If anyone abandons his righteous duty due to atheistic inclinations and gets involved in dissensions among kinsmen, he should be restrained by all the people devoted to the code of ethics laid down by Manu.

16. O Maheśvara, those people who forsake family duties, class duties and national duties are certainly fallen people.

17. One should not renounce the holy fire, abandon holy vows, break promise or forsake piety. If anyone does so, he is fallen.

18. You have neither father, nor mother. You have no brother or relative. No one takes note of your activities. A swallower of poison, you are an untouchable.

19. Wearing the garland of bones, ashes of the cremation ground, dirty rags and matted hairs, you are fickle and unbound by decorum. You don't deserve to stand before me.

20. You are perpetrator of disgraceful deeds. You don't observe vows and rites. You are a beggar of alms, always deceitful and wicked. O Īśvara, you are not fit even to talk with me."

21. Saying thus, the goddess cried with her eyes agitated with tears. Although the Lord of Devas consoled and appeased her, she continued to be excessively miserable.

22-24. Becoming furious once again the fair lady said: "I

know that you are not frank and straightforward. Your heart is hard for ever.

What has been said by Brāhmaṇas and Asuras appears to be false to me, because in regard to me, only wicked intention has been entertained by you. As Brāhmaṇas have been deceived by you, you will be punished (?) by Brāhmaṇas."

After saying this the goddess did not say anything again.

25. Lord Maheśvara made her appear pleased in the face slowly by means of courteous behavior and consoling words of persuasion based on sound reasoning.

26-27. Realizing that the goddess was pleased as evidenced by her eyes, Hara said casually: "O fair lady, your countenance has the lustre of full moon. Why do you make it foul and perverted through anger? Your words are not proper. Indeed, with a desire for the welfare of all living beings, mercy for all beings should be shown.

28. One may have a special craving for something. Yet others should not be troubled (for realizing it). O lady of excellent complexion, the entire universe is almost like your own progeny.

29. You alone are worthy of being worshipped by the universe, O sinless lady. You assume all forms. It is possible that a censurable thing has been committed by me and it was for the benefit of Devas.

30-31. Still, your son shall undoubtedly be born thus. Or, I shall do what you wish. You are indeed greater than even my very vital breathes. I shall carry out what you wish. O lady of excellent countenance, do tell me with a face beaming with pleasure."

32-35a. On being told thus the goddess said again to Maheśvara: "If you do these I shall bless you and revoke your curse. You shall adopt great Vratas during Cāturmāsya. You shall perform the Tāṇḍava dance even as the Devas watch it. O Maheśvara, after fulfilling the Vrata observance you must maintain celibacy. To please me you should give unto me the Vaiṣṇava half of your body. I shall then become pleased and revoke your curse. Otherwise, my mind will never have trust in you."

35b. On hearing it, Maheśvara became pleased and said to her in reply, "Yes; as you say."

36. The goddess became pleased and became agreeable to revoke the curse and bless him.

37. A man should listen to this Purāṇa (old legend) with perfect faith. He shall have the awareness of non-difference and steadfastness. Surely, his life shall be entirely fulfilled with objectives achieved. Men shall truthfully seek refuge in her.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYFOUR

Tāṇḍava Dance of Śaṅkara

Śudra said:

1-3. These words of yours appear to be mysterious to me, O sage of excellent Vratas. It is my great luck and it is due to my previous merits that you have come to my house. Ever-imbibing the nectar-like words of yours, by the narrative of Gauri, rich with special good features, I do not become satiated. How did Maheśvara perform the dance surrounded by the Suras?

4. How did all this happen in Cāturmāsya? What is called the Vrata to be observed? How did she bless? What is the blessing?

5. How is the Lord who grants me the benediction worshipped in the world? O excellent Brāhmaṇa, even as I ask, describe this in great detail.

6. O sage of excellent Vratas, be pleasant-faced and comfortable and narrate.

On hearing it, Gālava became delighted and said again:

Gālava said:

7. O sinless one, I shall narrate unto you this meritorious story that yields the fruit of ten thousand Yajñas. Listen with attention.

8. At the advent of Cāturmāsya, Hara observed the holy vow of celibacy devoutly and gladly.

9. He remembered the Devas and the great sages. Thereupon, the Devas arrived there and stood on the Mandara mountain.

10. They bowed down to Maheśāna with palms joined in veneration. On seeing that all of them had arrived, Hara said to them:

11-12. He told them what had been told by Pārvati in another context: "At the advent of Cāturmāsya when the dance is begun by me, all of you with Indra as your leader should assist me."

They were delighted. After bowing down to the Trident-bearing Lord, they said, "So it shall be."

13-14. They returned to their respective abodes by means of aerial chariots resembling the sun. Then on the fourteenth lunar day in the bright half of Āśāḍha, Maheśvara began to dance for the satisfaction and pleasure of Bhavānī, on Mandara, the most excellent of the mountains. The great sages went there:

15-17. They were: Nārada, Devala, Vyāsa, Śuka, Dvaipāyana and others. Aṅgiras, Marīci, Kardama the partriarch, Kaśyapa, Gautama, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, Jamadagni, Uttāṅka, Bhārgava Rāma, Agastya, Pulomā, Pulastya, Pulaha, Pracetas, Kratu and other great sages.

18. There were Siddhas, Yakṣas, Piśācas, Cāraṇas, Ādityas along with Cāraṇas, Guhayakas, Sādhyas, Vasus and Āsvins.

19. All these as well as Indra and others with Brahmā and Viṣṇu as their leaders arrived there with an eager desire to witness the dance of Maheśa.

20. Then the Gaṇas, the chief of whom was Nandin, duly gave jewels, ornaments and garments to the sages and others in due order.

21. Then thousands of musical instruments were played. "Be victorious", said everyone to the Lord who ordered the Vrata.

22-23. Bhavānī looked at Mahādeva with a delighted mind. The lady of splendid countenance shone in the midst of the four lady companions, Jayā, Vijayā, Jayantī and Maṅgalārūṇā. In her proximity the world shone with added lustre.

24. The splendour of her body is impossible to be described.

Īśa was also keenly observed by crores of the Gaṇas with multiple countenances.

25. He was surrounded by groups of Piśācas and goblins. At the head Nandī with his face resembling that of a monkey shone holding the golden wand (staff).

26. There were present Vidyādhara and Gandharvas like Citrasena and others. Nāgas and eminent sages were also present. They appeared as though they were painted in a picture.

27. There came Rāgas (musical compositions), the chief of whom was Śrīrāga. They are the sons of the Lord of great vigour. There were the *Amūrta* (incorporeal) sons born of Lord Hara.

28. Each of them had six wives (viz. Rāginīs) and the father of all of them was Pitāmaha. Along with those wives those Rāgas assumed graceful forms.

29. On being remembered by Śāmbhu they appeared instantly. I shall tell you their names. Listen, O affluent one.

30. Śrīrāga, the most charming one, is the first son of Īśvara. He occupied a seat in the middle of the eyebrows. He is the giver of the supreme Brahman (Parabrahman).

31. In the centre thereof is the excellent Gaṇa born of Māheśa.

The second (Rāga) originated from the waist region. It is Vasanta of great repute.

32. Pañcama (name of a Rāga) is the third one, the ornament of the universe. It originated from Viśuddhi Cakra (situated in the inner throat). It is marked by the principle *Mahat*.

33. The Anāhata Cakra originated from the heart of Maheśvara. The Rāga Bhairava which itself is Bhairava (terrible) originated from the region of nostril.

34. This Cakra is named Maṇipūraka¹ and it is indeed the bestower of salvation. The fifty Varṇas (letters) named Aṅka originated from Maheśvara.

35. The twelve Rāsis (signs of the zodiac) and the constellations originated from Svādhiṣṭhāna (Cakra) along with the seeds of the universe.

36. The organ of generation of Īśa gets enlarged in a moment. Then Retas (semen virile) issues forth and the universe is created from the Retas.

1 According to Patañjali, this Cakra is in the navel region Svādhiṣṭhāna Cakra is two finger breadth above Mūlādhara Cakra and Mūlādhara or Ādhara Cakra is (internally) two finger breadth in the middle part between penis and anus.

37. From the Ādhāra Cakra the great sixth (Rāga) named Naṭa Nārāyaṇa originated. It is the favourite son of Maheśa. It is Nīla (blue in colour) and it has the exploit of Viṣṇu.

38. These personified Rāgas assisted by their wives (Rāgiṇīs) originated thus. Their wives originated from the region of the head of the Pināka-bearing Lord.

39-46. They are altogether thirty-six in number. Listen to them.¹

The following (Rāgiṇīs) are the wives of Śrī Rāga: (1) Gaurī, (2) Kolāhali, (3) Dhirā, (4) Drāviḍī, (5) Mālakaśikī (mod. Mālakaṁsa?), and the (6) Devagāndhārī.

The following are the wives of Vasanta: (1) Āndolā, (2) Kauśikī, (3) Caramamañjarī, (4) Gaṇḍagīrī, (5) Devaśākhā, and (6) Rāmagīrī (the note in the original text is confusing).

The following are the six wives of Pañcama: (1) Trigūṇā, (2) Stambhatīrthā (current in the region about modern Cambay, (3) Ahīrī, (4) Kuṅkumā, (5) Vairatī, and (6) Sāmaverī.

The six wives closely following Bhairava are: (1) Bhairavī, (2) Gurjarī, (3) Bhāṣā, (4) Velāgūlī, (5) Karṇāṭakī, and (6) Raktahamsā. (No. 2 and 5 were local to those regions).

The six wives following Megharāga are: (1) Baṅgālī, (2) Madhurā, (3) Kāmodā, (4) Akṣīnārikā, (5) Devagīrī, and (6). Devālī.

The following are associated with Naṭanārāyaṇa: (1) Troṭakī, (2) Moḍakī, (3) Narā, (4) Dumbī, (5) Malhārī, and (6) Sindhumalhārī.

These bowed down to Girīśa and Maheśvarī and stationed themselves along with their husbands and also their forms and vehicles.

Brahmā propitiated Śaṅkara by means of Mṛdaṅga.

47. Keśava displayed the *Tālakṛīyā* (procedure for beating time) to Maheśa. Brahmā made a melodious note by means of the four-syllabled musical instrument.

48. Vāyus (Winds) played on the instruments melodiously and majestically.

Mahendra played the *Suśira* instrument Vamśa (flute) and created very melodious note.

1. This seems to be the information available to the Purāṇa author. The Rāgiṇīs were named after geographical region or the Tribals who developed them e.g. Drāviḍī, Ābhīrī (special to Ābhīra Tribe).

49. Vahni made the sound from the winnowing basket and Aśvins played on the Paṇava drum. Soma and Sūrya (went) round and played on their instruments by way of support to the other players.

50-51. Hundreds and thousands of the Gaṇas made sounds from bells. The eminent sages as well as the goddesses in the company of Pārvatī seated themselves on auspicious golden thrones and watched.

Vasus along with the great Urugas played on the Śṛṅgas (horns).

52. Sādhyas sounded Bherī drums and the other excellent Suras played on other instruments such as Jharjharī, Gomukha etc. Thus Sādhyas took active part in the great festival.

53. Gandharvas of melodious voice produced sweet notes from the strings of lutes. Siddhas around sounded golden horns.

54. Then the Lord assumed the body (dress, guise) of a great dancer. The crowns on the five heads were rendered splendid by serpents.

55. He let loose his entire tresses of matted hairs. The entire body was smeared with ashes. He wore necklaces and armlets on all his ten arms.

56. The Lord's physical form had the lustre of crores of Suns and it pervaded all the three worlds. With this form the Lord danced splendidly on that great mountain.

57. The instruments beginning with Viṇā (lute) are grouped as *Tata* (stringed ones). Kāṁsyatāla (Cymbals) etc. are *Ghana* (solid). Vamśa (flute) etc. are (Suśira) and Vāditra is the name for Tomara etc.

58-59. Thereafter, the four types of musical instruments sounded tumultuously. The form (splendour) of everything shone well such as the Tālās, Paṭahas etc. *Hastakas* (clapping of the hands), the *Mānas* (measurements and *Tānas* (a way of producing the different notes). The sound was full-throated, melodious, unfettered (uninhibited) and loud.

60. Viśvāvasu, Nārada and Turiburu, the leading Gandharvas, were the vocalists. The celestial damsels too had sweet voice.

61. The musical composition was divine and pure as well as well-conceived. It had the full complement of the three *Grāmas* (varieties of groups of Rāgas) and the seven notes.

62. The mountain upon which the soles of the feet of Hara struck produced loud sound and caused round whirling of the earth along with the cities and forests.

63-64. Lord Sadāśiva displayed eighty *Hastakas* (manual gestures). *Sūtas*, *Māgadhas* and *Bandins* (bards) were born from the sweat on the forehead of the Lord. *Gandharvas*, the universal musicians, were born of the heart of *Maheśa*. They had manifest forms and they had close association with the excellent stage of the Lord of *Devas*.

65. They caused wonder through their power, in the minds of the sages, the members of the audience. With their good powers *Kinnaras* showered flowers.

66. Thus the dance festivity continued for four months. Autumn passed off. The sky shone without impurities (clouds).

67. The lotuses that covered the lakes stood for the face of *Śarad*. The fruit-bearing trees and the medicinal herbs rendered the lustre of its face slightly pallid.

68. On the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of *Ūrja* (*Kārtika*) the Daughter of the Mountain was in a gay mood. After the conclusion of the *Vratas*, the Lord too shone then.

69-70. With eyes beaming and the voice distinctly audible, she spoke to *Śambhu* then: "When your *Līṅga* (penis) falls as a result of the curse of the *Brāhmaṇas*, it shall be sanctified by the waters of *Narmadā* and will become worthy of being adored by the whole universe." After saying thus the delighted goddess eulogized Hara:

Eulogy by Pārvatī:

71. Obeisance to you, the Lord of *Devas*, *Mahādeva* with a coronet. Obeisance to the creator of the universe, to Lord *Śaṅkara* who caused its birth, to *Śiva* (the auspicious one).

72. Obeisance to the Lord with matted hairs, the Lord that dispels obstacles to victory. Obeisance to thee having *Brāhmā* in the womb. Obeisance to you, *Hiraṇyaretas* (gold-semened), to the blue-throated one.

73. Obeisance to the Lord favouring *Brāhmaṇas*, the Lord smeared with white holy ashes, to the five-faced one. Obeisance, obeisance to the formless one.

74. Obeisance to you, the bright one with a thousand eyes.

Obeisance to the Lord wearing elephant hide. Obeisance to the Lord who granted salvation to Demon Andhaka. Obeisance to the Lord of Paśus (individual souls).

75. Obeisance, obeisance to Hara, the great Vipra (learned Brāhmaṇa) having the fire as your mouth. Obeisance to Bhava, to Śaṅkara, to Maheśa, to Īśvara.

76. Obeisance to you, the Lord in the form of incorporeal Brahman, to the creator of corporeal ones. Obeisance to Śiva, to Ugra, to Hara, to Bhava.

77. Obeisance to Kṛṣṇa, to Śarva, to the destroyer of Tripuras. Obeisance to Aghora; obeisance to you, the Puruṣa.

78. Obeisance to you, Sadyojāta, to Vāmadeva, to Īśāna, Obeisance to you, Pañcāsya (the five-faced one)¹, to Kapālin (the skull-holding one).

79. Obeisance to the odd (three)-eyed one, to Bhava, to the Lord who caused the fall of the eyes of Bhaga and that of the teeth of Pūṣan, to the Lord who caused the destruction of the great Yajña (of Dakṣa).

80. Obeisance to Mṛgavyādha (the hunter of the deer) (the form assumed by Dakṣa-Yajña), to the virtuous one, to the Time Wheel, the discus-bearing one, to the Lord worthy of being adored by great men; obeisance to the Lord of the Gaṇas.

81. Obeisance to the Lord holding Gaṅgā, to the Lord Mṛḍin (the bestower of welfare), to the Lord granting happiness to the world; obeisance to you in the form of Brahman.

82. Obeisance to the Lord that transcends all Guṇas, to the Lord possessing Guṇas, the subtle one, to the biggest one; obeisance to one of huge form, to the Lord who caused the birth of the holy ashes.

83-85a. Obeisance always to you, the preceptor of Yoga having the form of detachment, O Lord that brought about the destruction of Smara. It behoves you to condone and forgive the unpleasant words uttered by me, O Viśveśa, I propitiate you with the head (bent down). Undoubtedly blessings have been granted to thee after condonation (of the curse). O sinless one, anger should not be entertained by you, as a result of my crime.

1. These are the names of the five faces of Śiva.

85b-87. On being propitiated thus along with the Devas, Śambhu became pleased in his mind. Full of the greatest delight, thanks to the conclusion of the holy Vratas, he said to Umā: "O Pārvatī, if any one reads this eulogy of mine, composed by you, he will never be separated from the near and dear ones.

He will be endowed with wealth for three births. He will be free from all ailments. After enjoying pleasures of diverse kinds here, he will go to my city in the end."

88. After saying thus to her, Maheśa granted her a part of his body, the left side pertaining to Viṣṇu, which Pārvatī accepted.¹

89. The Śarva part had the skull in the hand; that of the neck had the poison therein. There was a half of the garland of headless trunks and it was white and fair all round.

90. It was that part which created crores of Brahmāṇḍas and the head was adorned with matted hairs. It shone with lustre of jewels in the form of crescent moon.

91. On one side it had gold ornaments and on the other serpents served the purpose of bracelet. On one side there was the elephant's hide and on the other there was the silk robe.

92. On one side it had the Matsyavāhana (the vehicle fish supposed to be Pārvatī's emblem). On the other side it was marked with the bull emblem. One side was served by the Pāṣadas and the other side attended upon by the female companions.

93. On seeing such a form with the eyes emitting lustre, the groups of Devas beginning with Brahmā eulogized with great devotion.

Prayer of Śiva-Pārvatī i.e. Ardha-nārīśvara form:

94. You alone are the Lord of all embodied beings, the omnipresent one. You are the protector like a father. You are the mother. You are what is named Jīva (the individual soul).

95. You are the witness. You are the seed of the universe. You are the one who keeps the whole cosmic egg under your

1. VV 89-92 describe the Ardha-nārīśvara form of Śiva. Greeks refer to such icons. Such icons are found at Badami, Kanchi etc. in the South (*Śaiva Darśana*, pp. 230-231).

control. Crores of Brahmāṇḍas originate from you and get dissolved in you.

96-97. All of us, the Suras beginning with Brahmā, carry out your behest. Like waves in ocean, like bubbles in water, I originate at times from your eye, at times from your forehead and at times along with goddess Śivā and then create the universe.

98. You are one with endless potency; you are infinite; you are limitless and your refulgence is unbounded. Infinite that you are, you adopt miraculous form for annihilating all.

99. O Bhavānī, you always (dispel) fear; you sanctify what is unholy. You are the bestower of all auspicious things. You are the fruit of all the austerities.

100. He who is Śiva is Viṣṇu himself. He who is Viṣṇu is Sadāśiva. This awareness of non-difference has dawned on us, though it is very little. It is with your favour that we have realized this.

101. Whatever is seen or heard and whatever exists in the world or outside, you have pervaded all those three and have stationed yourself.

102. O goddess of Suras worthy of being adored by the universe, O Āmbikā worthy of the veneration of the universe, O goddess of Devas, be pleased. O Lord of Devas, we bow down to you.

103-104. After saying this all the delighted Devas went away to where they had come from.

Gālava said:

Those men on the earth who mentally remember that unparalleled divine form of Śiva-Pārvatī; half Devī half Śiva, the sole raft for crossing the ocean of worldly existence, are persons whose sins are taken away. Free from all attachments, they attain the form of the Absolute (Brahman).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYFIVE

Greatness of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa

Gālava said:

1-4. Thus after being cursed by Pārvatī, they all (Suras) became afflicted and also devoid of issues. They had to assume the forms of human beings.

Śālagrāma is born from Gaṇḍakī and Maheśvara from Narmadā. They are thus self-born. Hence, these two cannot be (called) artificial.

Hari is present in the Śālagrāma of twenty-four varieties. He is to be tested (scrutinized) by the people but Sadāśiva is of a single form.

One who takes his bath in and drinks the pure water of Gaṇḍakī where there is Śālagrāma stone, attains the status of Brahman (or Region of Brahmā).

5. After (by) duly worshipping the Śālagrāma stone having its origin in Gaṇḍakī, one undoubtedly becomes a leading Yogin of pure soul.

6. Thus I have narrated to you everything that I was asked by you. Listen to how Hara incurred the curse of Brāhmaṇas.

7-9. A man who devoutly listens to the narration of this story connected with the dance of Girīśa and the story of his share of half of the Lord's body taken over by Umā, and the eulogy of Brahmā, shall attain the greatest goal.

He who reads the entire verse or a half thereof or even a fourth without any opposition having given up Māyā (deception) as well as arrogance goes to the greatest region after going where one does not get grief-stricken.

10. An excellent man who reads or listens (to this) especially during Cāturmāsya gets his cherished Siddhi (fulfilment of desire) and is richly endowed with wealth and is surrounded by sons etc.

11. Just as gods Brahmā and others attained the highest Siddhi by singing and playing on musical instruments near Durgā and Śiva (so does such a man).

12. When there is the advent of rainy season Janārdana is in devout Yogic slumber and Maheśvara is in the company

of Durgā, (such a man in v. 10 above) does not become a sucking child again.)

13. A man should always perform the worship of Gaṇeśa particularly during these four months for the sake of gain. His endeavour yields profit.

14. Sun-god grants freedom from illness to those by whom he is devoutly worshipped. If he is worshipped during Cāturmāsya he grants men special fruit.

15. This Pañcāyatana (set of five deities) is resorted to by householders. If it is worshipped during Cāturmāsya in particular, it yields everything desired.

16. If anyone always worships Viṣṇu present in Śālagrāma along with Dvārāvātī Cakraśilā, it gives liberation.

17. Especially during Cāturmāsya it grants salvation even through his mere vision. When it is eulogized it is as good as the entire universe eulogized. When it is adored, the entire universe is adored.

18. Hari dispels sins on being adored, read about, meditated upon and remembered in Śālagrāma because Hari is present in Śālagrāma.

19. What then is the Naivedya of Hari? Of course fruit, ghee and water. Particularly in Cāturmāsya everything pertaining to Śālagrāma is auspicious.

20. Gingelly seeds offered on Śālagrāma, O son of a Śūdra, sanctify the man endowed with devotion. It is more so, particularly during Cāturmāsya.

21. He is endowed with glory and prosperity always. He is endowed with wealth and foodgrain. There is no doubt about it that he will be born in the house of highly fortunate ones.

22. Undoubtedly, he should be known as Viṣṇu accompanied by Lakṣmī. One should adore him with great devotion. The Goddess of prosperity shall remain steady in his house.

23. As long as one does not worship Hari, penury may still linger in the world, sin (sins in general) may roar, and pains and strains may torment the body.

24. Where he is worshipped that makes the area extending to five Krośas (a Krośa = 3 Kms.) sacred. Nothing inauspicious can happen there.

25. This alone is the greatest luck. This alone is the

greatest penance. This alone is the greatest salvation wherein the Lord of Lakṣmī is worshipped.

26. Śrī (prosperity), *Vijaya* (success), Viṣṇu and *Mukti* (salvation)—these four are present there where there is Dakṣiṇāvarta (curved to the right side) conchshell identical with Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa, Tulaṣī plant, Kṛṣṇasāra (black antelope) and the stone called Dvārāvati.

27. The set of these four gives unparalleled merit to a man who performs the worship of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa. He becomes liberated instantly.

28. Hari associated with Lakṣmī should be worshipped, especially in Cāturmāsya.

29. Meditation on that Lord is destructive of the sins of that person who practises it. If he is worshipped with bunches of Tulaṣī, one is reborn no more (i.e. is liberated).

30. If he is worshipped with Bilvapatra during Cāturmāsya, he is the best of those who dispel sins.

31. The Lord of all the worlds alone has pervaded the universe. He creates and destroys sportingly. He should be resorted to with all efforts. After attaining him a devotee ceases to be distressed.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYSIX

Efficacy of the Name of Rāma

Gālava said:

1. Once Lord Rudra who stayed on the peak of Kailāsa mountain in the company of Umā, was endowed with greatest refulgence.

2-7. At that time three crores of Gaṇas surrounded him. These and many others were by the side of Bhava: Virabāhu, Virabhadra, Vīrasena, Bhṛṅgirāṭ, Ruci, Tuti, Nandin, Puṣpadanta, Utkāṣa, Vikāṣa, Kaṇṭaka, Hara, Keśa, Vighaṇṭaka, Mālādhara, Pāśadhara, Śṛṅgin, Narana, Puṇyotkāṣa, Śālibhadra, Mahābhadra, Vibhadraka, Kaṇapa, Kālapa, Kāla, Dhanapa, Raktalocana, Vikāṣya, Bhadraka, Dīrghajihva, Virocana, Pārada. Dhanada, Dhavaṅkṣin, Haṁsagrī, Naraka, Pañcaśīrṣa, Triśīrṣa, Kroḍadamīṣṭra, Mahādbhuta

(excessively wonderful), Simhavaktra, Vṛṣahanu, Pracanda and Tuṇḍi.

8-9. At the advent of spring, rows of trees shone as they were rendered splendid with fresh buds and blossoms. Accompanied by Bhadrakālī the groups of Bhūtas, Pretas, and Piśācas eulogized him shouting victory to Mahādeva from the vicinity, as they were his beloved ones.

10. A close contact with the southern wind appeared pleasant to the poets. Kīmśuka appeared splendid in its blossoms attracting the hearts of lonely lovers separated from their beloved.

11. On that solemn occasion, when all the minds were rendered intoxicated and elated, the Gaṇas around sported about imitating the activities of couples.

12. On seeing them the staff-bearing Nandin who was virtually another Hara (Śiva) showed signs as if saying, "Enough of your fickleness. O Gaṇas, may ye all perform the penance."

13. The forest then became silent with all the birds remaining quiet. All those Gaṇas, resumed their penance on seeing the splendour of spring.

14. Then Pārvatī, the mother of the universe, asked Śaṅkara: "O Maheśvara, this rosary of beads is always held in your hands.

15. My mind is in doubt. What Japa is being performed by you? You are the sole primordial creator of all living beings. You are the Lord of everything.

16. You have neither a mother nor a father. You do not have any kinsman. You don't belong to any caste. I know that there is nothing greater than you.

17. Though performing Japa with great devotion, it appears to me that while you are engaged in inhaling and exhaling, you do it under some strain.

18. O Lord of Devas, if I am your beloved, tell me: Is there anything (anyone) greater than you which you meditate upon mentally?"

19. On being asked thus, Śāmbhu, the servant of Hari said: "I meditate upon the essence of the thousand names of Hari always."

20. I perform Japa of the seventh incarnation of Hari known by the name of Rāma and the twenty-four manifestations as well as the good qualities of Hari.

21-22. With the rosary, I always perform the Japa of Praṇava inclusive of Bindu. What is called Praṇava is highly efficacious and it is the essence of all these (foregoing Avatāras etc.). I perform Japa of the eternal Brahman (Mantra) endowed with twelve syllables. (i.e. *Om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*). Praṇava is union of three syllables (*a-u-m*) and it is endowed with the three *Grāmas* (of musical melody).

23. This two-syllabled Mantra (i.e. *Rāma*) is the essence of the Vedas. It is permanently exalted, free from impurities, immortal, tranquil, of the nature of the Sat (existence). It is comparable to nectar.

24. It transcends the Kalās. It cannot be subjected to our control, it is devoid of *Vyāpāra* (worldly activity). It is the greatest of the great. It is the support of the universe. It is in the centre of all the worlds. It is the seed of a crore of Brahmanḍas (Cosmic Eggs).

25. It is inert, of pure activity, It is unsullied; it is the controller. On knowing it one is immediately liberated from the bondage of the terrible worldly existence.

26. To one who performs Japa of the twelve-syllabled *Bijamantra* inclusive of Omkāra, it becomes the destroyer of crores of sins like a forest fire (that consumes the whole forest).

27. This is extremely recondite. This alone is the greatest refulgence. It is indeed very difficult to obtain. It is the ornament of all the three worlds.

28. This alone, the meditation on the twelve-syllabled Mantra, is the greatest knowledge. It is attained through crores of births. It is destructive of the auspicious as well as the inauspicious.

29-30. Especially during Cāturmāsya, it gives Brahman (identity with the absolute). It yields what is desired. One who always recites the eulogy born of these syllables mentally, verbally and physically has no rebirth. The Mantra with the twelve syllables is embellished with twelve Cakras (wheel-like mystic circles or plexuses).

31-35. A devotee should utter the names of the twelve months and perform the ritualistic Nyāsa thereof on the Śālagrāmas of Viṣṇu. They are destructive of sins. For each of those days one shall obtain the fruit of twelve days.

It is impossible to extol adequately the greatness of the twelve-syllabled Mantra even with thousands of tongues. Even Brahmā cannot ward it off. This great Mantra should be meditated upon and eulogized. Its Japa should be performed in all the months and particularly during Cāturmāsya. It is destructive of sins. This is the mystic doctrine of the Vedas, many Purāṇas and all the Smṛtis.

By mere remembering of the twelve syllables mortals get the desired Siddhi.

36. By means of the meritorious gift of sandalwood (Yāmya-sandalwood), permanent liberation is achieved by people of all castes and stages of life. (The Japa and Dhyāna) is attended with the utterance of Praṇava.

37. Certainly, one attains liberation by means of Japa and Dhyāna performed with mental calm. In the case of Sūdras and women, the Japa is done without Praṇava.

38. In the case of all Prakṛtis (common people) the twelve-syllabled Mantra, Japa and Tapas (penance) are not needed. Purity can be achieved through bodily exertion.

39. Purity (*Viśuddhi*) is achieved through devotion to Brāhmaṇas, making gifts and meditation on Viṣṇu. To them the requisite Mantra is the name Rāma. If Rāmanāma is meditated upon, it yields crores and more times benefit.

40-42. The Japa of the two-syllabled 'Rāma' dispels all sins. While going round, standing by or lying down a man should recite (the name of) Rāma. Thereby, he attains excess of delight and proceeds ahead and at the end becomes a Gaṇa of Hari.

The two-syllabled Mantra, *Rāma*, is superior to hundreds and crores of Mantras. It is said to be the destroyer of sins of all the Prakṛtis (people). At the advent of Cāturmāsya it grants endless benefit.

43. It is obtained by the people eagerly devoted to *Bhakti* (fidelity to the godhead) in the course of Cāturmāsya of great merit. In their case resorting to the world of Yama is futile (i.e. they do not go to it) as in the case of Devas.

44. On the surface of the earth there is nothing superior to Rāma worthy of Japa. To those who seek shelter in Rāmanāma there is no (fear of) torture of Yama.

45. All the defects causing obstacles and all the quarrels causing death cease to exist and get dissolved only through the name of Rāma. There is no doubt in this.

46. What is called Rāma dwells in all the living beings immobile as well as mobile, in the form of the immanent soul.

47. The Lord of all Mantras, i.e. Rāma, destroys fear and ailments. It grants victory in battle and gets every task accomplished.

48. It is said to be yielding the same benefit as all the Tirthas (together). It fulfills cherished desires of even Brāhmaṇas. It is called Rāmacandra and Rāma.

49. The two-syllabled Lord of all Mantras called as Rāma, gets all tasks on the earth accomplished. Even the Devas sing about the name of Rāma, the mine of all qualities.

50. Hence, O goddess of Devas, you too always utter the name of Rāma. He who performs the Japa of Rāma's name is liberated from all sins.

51. The merit accruing from the utterance of a thousand names can be acquired by means of Rāma's name itself. Especially during Cāturmāsya, the merit thereof is ten times more.

52. The great sin of those born in the base caste gets burned.

53. This Rāma pervades this entire universe by means of his refulgence in the form of the immanent soul. He sanctifies everything by burning down in an instant all the sins of the previous lives, gross and subtle.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYSEVEN

Pārvatī's Penance

Pārvatī said:

1. Describe to me in detail the greatness of the twelve-syllabled Mantra syllable-wise along with the merit of each and the mode of recitation by me.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

2. In the case of the twice-born, the twelve-syllabled Mantra is associated with Omkāra. In the case of women and Śūdras it is cited as preceded by obeisance i.e. *namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*.

3. In the case of Prakṛtis (laymen) the name of Rāma in the six-syllabled form is allowed (*rāmāya te namaḥ*). That too is without Praṇava as decided by Purāṇas and Smṛtis.

4. This is the procedure in the case of all castes and Prakṛtis (low castes) always. If a man performs the Japa without the regular order, the Lord becomes angry and sends him to Naraka etc.

Pārvatī said:

5. O Lord, the Lord of the universe is served by me with three Māntrās (syllabic time). He is beyond the reach of words. How do I know his form?

Īśvara said:

6. O lady of excellent complexion, you are not authorised to utter Praṇava. You have always to perform the Japa as *namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*.

Pārvatī said:

7. If the twelve-syllabled Mantra is made inclusive of Praṇava, how can it be meditated upon? As I have not been authorized in the use of Praṇava, how is the Japa possible, O Dhūrjati?

Īśvara said:

8. Praṇava has been glorified as the origin of all the Devas. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva reside therein accompanied by their beloved ones.

9. All the Bhūtas (living beings) and all the Tīrthas are stationed there partially. It is *Kaivalya* (salvation); it is Brahman.

10. O lady of auspicious countenance, when you perform penance during Cāturmāsya for propitiating Hari, you will be entitled thereto.

11. Cherished desire is attained through penance; great merit is acquired through penance. Everything takes place through penance; everything is easily acquired by men through penance.

12. Fame, incomparable conjugal felicity, qualities like forbearance, truthfulness etc., are easily acquired through penance, but penance cannot be performed.

13. When penance flourishes, there will be devotion to Hari. If it is performed without devotion, it involves the loss of penance.

14. When one always remembers Viṣṇu, when the tip of the tongue becomes pure, austerities roar in the bodies of men always.

15. Just as great darkness perishes when a lamp burns brightly, so also sin gets destroyed when Hari's story (is narrated and listened to).

16. Hence, O Pārvatī, assiduously perform penance along with Praṇava when Hari is asleep at the advent of Cāturmāsya.

17. Remaining pure in heart, perform the Japa of this king of Mantras consisting of twelve syllables. The Lord shall surely become pleased.

18. The Lord will grant the greatest knowledge in the form of the entire Brahman. Do perform the Japa of the twelve-syllabled Mantra in the course of crores of Brahmakalpas.

19a. He who meditates on this great Mantra including Praṇava will not meet with difficulty. (*Text defective*).

19b. On being told thus, she who was bent on performing penance proceeded to perform it.

20. When Cāturmāsya arrived, she came to the peak of Himālaya. She wore three clothes¹ and adopted the vow of celibacy.

21. She meditated on Hari, the benefactor. Her body was subjected to strain as before, at the time of the adoration of Śaṅkara.

22. That lady of wide eyes, endowed with qualities of forbearance etc.; performed the penance on a charming peak of her father (Himālaya). She was accompanied by her companions.

1. *vasana-traye*. This should better be emended as *savana-traya* 'three baths' as it is more appropriate, as three baths at morning, noon and evening are essential in penance.

Gālava said:

23. Pārvatī is worthy of being meditated upon by leading Yogins; she is worthy of being saluted. She is adored by the entire universe and is the mother of the universe. Even she performed penance being urged by desire (to do so).

24. She is in the form of Prakṛti and Sat (the Absolute Reality). Her lustre is equal to that of ten millions of lightning streaks. She is devoid of Rajas quality and is herself worthy of being saluted. She who transcends the Guṇas (the three attributes), performed the penance.

25. They know her as identical with Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether; she is in the form of the primordial Prakṛti, (yet) she performed the excellent penance.

26. She who stays pervading mobile and immobile beings of the universe, who is greater than Prakṛti and who is the bestower of contentment in the form of Sṛṣṭhā (desire) etc. attained purity by means of the penance when the Lord was asleep.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYEIGHT

Hara is Cursed

Gālava said:

1-6. When the Daughter of the Mountain became engrossed in a great and terrible penance, Hara who had been overwhelmed by Kandarpa (god of Love) roamed over the earth in the Tirthas, cool shades of trees, rivers, streams everywhere. Maheśvara indulged in sprinkling his body with water. Still the Lord oppressed by Kāma, did not attain happiness anywhere.

Once, on seeing Yamunā full of ripples, he became inclined to dive therein as though he could thus alleviate the distress due to the heat (love-fever).

But the water of the river turned bluish dark in hue due to the fire in the physical form of Hara.

Heated as a result of his diving in the water she shone like ink. Though originally the river had divine form, she became

dark due to Śiva. She (the presiding deity of the river) eulogized and bowed to Maheśāna and spoke thus: "O Lord of Devas, be pleased with me. I am always subservient to you."

Īśvara said:

7-8a. If anyone on the earth takes his bath in this meritorious excellent Tīrtha, thousands of his sins will certainly get destroyed. It will be sacred and well-known in the world as "*Haratīrtha*".

8b. Having said this, he bowed to her and vanished there itself.

9. Maheśa adopted a handsome form and (roamed about) on her banks. He appeared so beautiful that he was (as it were) the refuge of the god of Love. He had kept his hair matted and held some musical instruments in his hands. He had the Puṇḍra mark (a line or lines drawn with sandal or ash etc.) on the forehead.

10. As he passed through the abode of sages at will, he displayed fickle and rash movements of his limbs. He sang songs here and danced there as he pleased.

11-12. Sometimes, he stood in the centre of the women laughing or (feigning) anger.

Even as he roamed about thus, the wives of the sages became infatuated and mentally fancied him in the form of their husbands. They left off the services of their husbands and other domestic chores for the nonce.

13-14. Those women too indulged in laughter (and going after him). On seeing their misbehaviour, the sages became furious. The handsome features of the Lord enraged them further. They shouted: "Let this fellow be held and beaten. Who is this wicked fellow that has come here?"

15. Uttering thus, they took up wooden sticks and rushed at him. Afraid of those noble sages, he fled away.

16-17. It was he who pervades the universe through a part of his life and presides over the embodied ones. He is not to be known. He cannot be seized. Nor can he be split or broken. When they all could not catch hold of Maheśvara, the angry Brāhmaṇas cursed Śiva thus:

18-20. "It was on account of your Liṅga (penis) that you came to the hermitages like a thief. Since you have abducted

other men's wives, let your Liṅga fall on the ground. O Tāpasa (ascetic), this terrible curse will affect you immediately."

As soon as this (curse) was uttered, the tremendous fire of the curse adopted an adamant form, cut off the Liṅga of Dhūrjaṭi and made it fall on the ground. The almighty Lord swooned with his body smeared with blood.

21. Despite his refulgent form, the Lord became distressed due to pain as he had been overwhelmed by the great curse. On seeing that he had fallen thus, the great sages came there.

22. All the living beings in the sky trembled. The entire universe quaked. Even the Devas became agitated. They experienced great fear.

23. After recognizing that it was Maheśa the Brāhmaṇas were much afflicted in the heart. In their grief-stricken state, they lamented that extreme powerfulness of fate:

24. "Oh, what has been done! This is the Lord. He is served by even the Devas. He is the witness (Immanent Soul) of the entire universe. (Unfortunately) he was not recognised.

25. We are sinners of deluded intellect rendered feeble due to our own ignorance. How is it that he, our own soul, was neither heard nor revealed!

26-28. (Lord) like this, this very soul, was not revealed to me, a householder. He is devoid of change, sensuousness, desires, free from trouble, sense of possession, egotism. That very Śāmbhu was not recognised by us. All these worlds always abide in his person. He is immanent. Such very master of the worlds was not noticed (recognised) by us!"

After saying this they came and sat there.

29. On seeing them Maheśvara became afraid once again. The Enemy of Tripuras vanished because of his fear of the curse of the Brāhmaṇas. He went to heaven.

30. With great self-control, he eulogized the cow Surabhi (Kāmadhenu) in Goloka:

Prayer to Kāmadhenu:

"Obeisance, obeisance to the mother, the cause of creation, sustenance and annihilation.

31. You are the one who nurtures the earth by means of juicy substances. You promote the welfare of the groups of Devas and Pitrs.

32. You are known as the bestower of sweet taste by all who are well conversant with juices. It is due to you that this universe is endowed with strength and tenderness.

33. You are the mother of all Rudras and the daughter of Vasus. You are the sister of Ādityas. Once pleased, you are the bestower of the desired Siddhi.

34. You are *Dhṛti* (fortitude) and *Pustī* (nourishment). You are Svāhā as well as Svadhā. You are *Ṛddhi* (prosperity), *Siddhi* (spiritual achievement) as well as Lakṣmī (fortune), *Dhṛti* (forbearance), *Kīrti* (reputation) and *Mati* (intellect).

35. You are *Kānti* (refulgence), *Lajjā* (bashfulness), *Mahāmāyā* (the great Illusion) and *Śraddhā* (faith) that gets everything accomplished. In all the three worlds there is nothing that is bereft of you.

36. You are the bestower of satisfaction on Vahni (fire) as well as the Devas and others. This entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings, is pervaded by you.

37. The four Vedas are your feet, and the four seas are your udders. The Moon and the Sun are your eyes. The Devas are at the tips of your hairs.

38. O goddess, all the mountains are on your horns and the winds between your ears. Nectar is in the navel and the nether-worlds constitute your hoofs.

39. Lord Brahmā is on your shoulder. Sadāśiva is stationed on your forehead. Viṣṇu is stationed in the region of the heart and serpents are at the tip of your tail.

40. All the Vasus are stationed in the dung. All the Sādhyas are satiated in your urine. All the Yajñas are in the region of the bones and Kinnaras are stationed in the private parts.

41. All the groups of Pitṛs shine always stationed in front of you. All Yakṣas are in the region of the forehead and Kinnaras in the cheeks.

42. You are identical with all the Devas. Indeed you are the bestower of the prosperity on all living beings. You are the benefactress of all the worlds. Be the benefactress of my physical form forever.

43. O goddess of Devas, I bow down. O sinless one, I adore you always: I eulogize you, the destroyer of the grief of all the worlds. Be pleased. Be the bestower of boons.

44. O splendid one, my body is burned by the fire of the

curse of Brāhmaṇas. O goddess born of nectar, it behoves you to revive it by means of your refulgence."

45. After saying thus he circumambulated her and merged into her body. Thereafter, Surabhi (divine cow) held him within her womb.

46. When the Lord of Devas overcome by the fear of the curses of Brāhmaṇas vanished therein, everyone became agitated due to the delay thereafter.

47. Devas became extremely distressed. The earth shook, the sun and the moon became dim and the wind violent.

48-49. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the seas became agitated at that time.

It is in that Lord that mobile beings, immobile beings etc. get merged in due course and grow once again. When he vanished on being afflicted by the curse of the Brāhmaṇas, the universe became practically struck dead instantly.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYNINE

Prayer to the Bull

Gālava said:

1-4. When the Liṅga that had the length and girth of a Yojana fell down, the groups of the sages who came there in thousands were distressed with anguish.

In order to find out Maheśvara they surveyed all round but agitated due to fear that he was, he never came within the range of their vision.

The semen had been well retained for many thousands of years and the Brāhmaṇas saw it pervading the entire earth. On seeing the great Liṅga smeared with blood and flooded with waters, the Brāhmaṇas were in a dilemma. The earth was (as though) burning.

5. They established the Liṅga there and created river Narmadā. The water flowed in the form of Narmadā and the Liṅga became mountain Amarakaṇṭaka.

6. It (the water) wards off Naraka (hell) when resorted to. The water is destructive of hellish torture. All the evil

Planets and spirits will certainly get destroyed.

7. By bathing there and drinking the water thereof as well as offering libations to Pitṛs (with it), a man obtains all desires (even if they are) very rare on the earth.

8. If men adore the Liṅgas obtained from Narmadā, their body will become Rudramaya (pervaded by Rudra) undoubtedly.

9. The adoration of the Liṅga especially during Cāturmāsya yields great benefits. Rudra-japa, worship of Hara and devotion to Śiva (are essential) during Cāturmāsya.

10-13. So also is the ablution (of Śiva) with Pañcāmṛta. Those who do this will never experience the pain of staying in womb.

If honey is sprinkled on the top of the Liṅga, thousands of their sorrows certainly perish.

One who offers *Dīpa* (lamp) before Śiva during Cāturmāsya shall redeem crores of members of his family and attain Śivaloka where he can stay as he pleases.

Those who worship a Liṅga taken from the waters of Narmadā with sandalpaste, agallochum, incense and white flowers become Śiva themselves. Even rocks have become Hara. It is still more so in the case of living beings.

14. A devotee should worship duly during Cāturmāsya that great Liṅga originating therefrom and water should be held (above) it. He shall become Śiva himself.

15. The men who keep up self-control and take their holy bath in the Narmadā Tīrtha at Amarkaṇṭaka shall reside in the heaven.

Brahmā said:

16. After saying thus, the Brāhmaṇas assured themselves that the Liṅga had been installed in accordance with the injunctions in the Amarkaṇṭaka Tīrtha in the great river Narmadā.

17. Again they began to brood over and ponder in view of the agitation all over the universe. They sat in the lotus posture and began their Prāṇāyāma (breathing exercise).

18. They meditated in an unruffled manner on Maheśvara stationed in the heart. Then there the Devas beginning with Mahendra arrived at Amarkaṇṭaka.

19. With their shoulders stooping down in humility they eulogized the Brāhmaṇas:

“O great Lords, obeisance to you the twice- born ones, the knowers of Brahman.

20. Obeisance to our preceptors, the Devas of the earth, those who are free from all bonds. You all have transcended the three Guṇas; you are the repositories of good qualities, nay, the very forms of goodness.

21. You sustain the bubbles of vital airs incessantly through the objects evolved by the three Guṇas (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas). Through the mere utterance of you all, even the greatest sinners attain purity as though washed with water. Heaps of the sins of sinners are reduced to ash as though through fire.

22. To you the mere utterance (of words) is like the weapon of steel. You are endowed with it. When you are oppressed by sinners that very power of utterance gives you supermundane strength.

23. You are on a par with the earth on account of forbearance and forgiveness. You have the lustre (burning power) of fire when in fury. You alone are competent to cause the fall of many Śaktis (powers).

24. In the matter of proceeding towards heaven etc. certainly you have the means to go.

25. You urge others to perform good actions. You yourselves are always engaged in the performance of good rites. You are the bestowers of the benefits of good activities. You desire salvation through excellent rites.

26. You who are engrossed in the Sāvitrī Mantra are the destroyers of sins. There is no doubt about this that you redeem yourselves and also the Yajamāna (the householders for whom you perform religious rites).

27. Sacred fires as well as Brāhmaṇas give success in undertakings. Especially during Cāturmāsya their adoration yields great benefits.

28-30. When infuriated they cause the destruction of all bodies. Neither the thunderbolt of Indra nor the trident of the Pināka-bearing Lord, nor the staff of Yama are as powerful as the curse originating from a Brāhmaṇas. Only a visible (and concrete) object is burned by fire. But a curse destroys both

those who are born and who are unborn. Hence, one shall not make a Brāhmaṇa angry. One burnt by the fire of the anger of a Brāhmaṇa can never be liberated from Naraka.

31. There is no doubt about this that even one wounded with weapons is liberated from hell. Indeed the competence of the Devas is only with reference to the splitting of grain of cereals and imbibing of liquor (honey).

32. The entire universe is split through the mere utterance of a Brāhmaṇa. Such holy ones as you are our preceptors, the causes of the universe. O Lords of the universe, may ye all be pleased with us always.

33. Without Īśvara (Śiva), all of us and all the worlds are miserable. Hence let it be known to us where the Lord Parameśvara is.

Gālava said:

34-36. After coming to know that the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas was afraid of the sages and that the Lord is reborn from the womb of Surabhi, the great sages said to the Devas: "Welcome to the chiefs of Devas. That great Lord has been found out. May all the leading Devas proceed to the place where the eternal Lord is present." After saying this the noble-souled ones accompanied the Devas.

37. They went to Goloka by the celestial path, where the milk-pudding formed boggy quagmire, ghee flowed like rivers and honey constituted whirlpools and rivers flowed together.

38. All the groups of the ancestors held curds and nectar in their hands. There were Marīcīpas, Somapas and other groups of Siddhas.

39. There were Ghṛtapas and Sādhya. It was the place where the eternal Lord was present. The sages went there and saw the son of Surabhi.

40. By means of his refulgence, he is well-known as Nila. He was running about here and there in the midst of cows.

41-46. The following were the cows present there: Nandā, Sumanasā, Surūpā, Suśīlakā, Kāminī, Nandinī, Medhyā, Hiranyadā, Dhanadā, Dharmadā, Narmadā, Sakalapriyā, Vāmanā, Ālambikā, Kṛṣṇā, Dīrghaśṛṅgā, Supicchikā, Tārā, Tareyikā, Śāntā, Durvīṣahyā,

Manoramā, Sunāsā, Dīrghanāsā, Gaurā, Gauramukhī, Haridravarṇā, Nīlā, Śaṅkhinī, Pañcavarṇakā, Vinatā, Abhinatā, Bhinnavarṇā, Supatrikā, Jayā, Aruṇā, Kuṇḍodhni (a cow with full udders), Sudatī and Cārucāmpakā. The sages and the Devās saw the bull *Nīla* in the centre of these cows. The beautiful bull was roaming about. Their wonder was aroused. The leading sages were overwhelmed with compassion. Indra and others became delighted in their minds. Rendered happy due to its refulgence, they began to eulogize it.

Śūdra said:

47. How did this (bull) of wonderful features come to be named *Nīla*? Did those delighted Brāhmaṇas eulogize the cause of the universe?

Gālava said:

48-50. That bull which is red in colour and whitish in its face and tail as well as white in hoofs and horns is remembered as *Nīlavṛṣabha* (Blue Bull). One that has four legs, that is of the form of *Dharma* and is marked with blue and red marks and that is also tawny in the imprints of the hoofs is remembered as *Nīlavṛṣabha*. He, the Lord *Maheśvara*, is also *Vṛṣa* (virtue, righteousness, Bull).

51. *Hara* is of the form of *Dharma* having four feet. He is blue-complexioned and five-faced. Merely through his vision, one shall obtain the benefit of *Vājapeya*.

52. If the *Nīla* (bull) is adored by the offer of juicy, luscious morsels (of fodder), it is as though the entire universe is adored; the whole world shall become satiated.

53. In its body the glorious, omnipresent *Janārdana* is present and he worships it always by means of the eternal Vedic Mantras.

The sages said:

54. You are the Lord of all protectors. You are eternal. You remove obstacles. You bestow wisdom and knowledge. You grant salvation. You are piety (*Dharma*) personified.

55. You alone are the bestower of wealth and fortune. You dispel all ailments. You are actively engaged in creating welfare. You are the bestower of gold.

56. O extremely mighty son of Surabhi, you are the abode of all refulgences. Kailāsa together with Pārvatī was held up at the tip of your horns by you,

57. You are worthy of being eulogized by the Vedas. You are identical with the Vedas. You are the soul of the Vedas. You are the foremost among those who are conversant with the Vedas. You can be known only through the Vedas. The Vedas are your vehicle (means to know you). The Vedas constitute your form. You are the receptacle of good qualities.

58-61a. You are distinct from and beyond the three Guṇas. Who can comprehend your inherent nature? O Lord, you are the almighty Vṛṣa.

He who sins against you should be known as Vṛṣala (Śūdra). He is cooked in Raurava and other Narakas. That man is to be hit (touched) with foot. He experiences the tortures in Narakas etc. along with groups of sinners, with his feet fettered with chains.

If ruthless men, torture further a person emaciated due to hunger and overwhelmed with thirst and also weighed down by great odds and heavy burdens, their intellect (mental condition) cannot be steady.

61b-62. With the Pitṛs in view, men should celebrate your wedding—you in the form of Nīla—along with four others, in accordance with injunctions pertaining to marital rites. None in their family will ever fall into Naraka.

63. You are the goal of all the worlds. You are the father Parameśvara. Without you, the entire universe perishes instantly.

64. Speech is of four types or stages viz. Parā, Paśyanti, Madhyamā and Vaikharī. Learned men know you as the Lord of all types of speech.

65. They know you alone as the Vṛṣabha with four horns, four feet, two heads and seven hands.¹ You are identical with Dharma, bound threefold.

1. This is the traditional description of the Fire-god. Agni and Rudra are identified in the Vedas. Hence the description of Agni is applied to Rudra or Vṛṣabha here.

66. People know you as the perpetual Brahman identical with Dharma. You give contentment to all living beings. You pervade the universe by means of your strength and prowess.

67. People conversant with the Purāṇas know you. You cannot be cut off. You cannot be pierced through. You cannot be comprehended. You have great fame. You need not be grieved over. You are incapable of being burnt.

68. All this (visible world) has you as the support. This universe has you as the base. Devas have you as the base. Amṛta (nectar) has also you as the base.

69-70. In the form of the individual soul you pervade the three worlds and stand permanently.

Thus Nīla was eulogized by the Somapāyin Brāhmaṇas.

With a delighted face, he accepted their obeisance. The Brāhmaṇas who had sinned against Śiva said again.

71-73. They granted a boon to Maheśa in the form of Nīla (in accordance with pīety (Dharma)). If on the death of a man, a Vṛṣa is not let loose on the eleventh day he will be eternally a Preta (ghost) despite hundreds of Śrāddhas being performed.

On seeing the great Vṛṣa, Nīla, restless once again with a slight vestige of anger still clinging the Brāhmaṇas branded him. They made the mark of the discus on the left and that of the trident on the right side,

74. They let him loose in the midst of the cows duly protected by Devas.

Thereupon, all the groups of Devas and great sages went to their respective adodes. The sages became free from jealousy.

75. Thus Śiva who became distressed by the love for the wives of the leading sages incurred their curse, but due to their devotion attained *Śilāmayatva* (the state of being a stone) in the waters of Revā.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTY

Paijavana Takes Leave

Gālava said:

1-2. Thus everything worthy of being narrated regarding Śālagrāma has been told to you and also Maheśvara's birth and how he attained the form of Liṅga.

Hence, if men devoutly adore the excellent Liṅga form and Hari present in Śālagrāma, they will never suffer from miseries and tortures.

3. At the advent of Cāturmāsya, one should particularly adore both of them. Adored without any differentiation they bestow heavenly pleasures and salvation.

4. O great Śūdra, Hari grants salvation to those people who devoutly worship Lords Hari and Hara present in Brāhmaṇas, fires and cows.

5-6. A Śūdra interested in the Vedas should get the *Pūrta* and *Iṣṭa* rites performed (through others). That Śūdra should get the Pañcāyatana adoration also performed. He should be truthful in speech and he should not be greedy. He should be endowed with qualities of discrimination etc. He attains good goal. He need not have celibacy and austerity apart from meditation on the twelve-syllabled Mantra.

7. An excellent worship of the Slayer of Naraka (Kṛṣṇa) and others should be performed without Mantras but with the sixteen services (*Upacāras*) duly carried out. In the same way, O great Śūdra, worship of the Consort of the Daughter of Mountain should be performed. This adoration dispels great sins.

Brahmā said:

8-9. Even as these two were holding conversation the night came to a close. The Brāhmaṇa was honoured by him. The excellent Śūdra and Gālava accompanied by his disciples quickly went to their (respective) abodes.

10. If any man listens to, recites or teaches any *Śloka* (verse) or the entire piece, his merit will never decline.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYONE

Dhyānayoga¹

Nārada said:

1-2. How did the eternal glorious goddess, the Consort of Hara, attain in the course of four months the great Yogasiddhi, after performing the Japa of this Mantrarāja resting on twelve syllables? Do describe this in detail to me accurately.

Brahmā said:

3. During Cāturmāsya when Hari was asleep, Pārvatī, strictly adopted all vows and observances. Mentally, verbally and physically, she engaged herself completely in the devotion to Hari.

4. She stationed herself on a beautiful peak of her father and regularly performed austerities. She was devotedly engaged in the worship of the deity, Brāhmaṇas, fire, cow, the holy fig tree and guests.

5. At the advent of Cāturmāsya on the pure and sacred day of Hari, she performed the Japa of the exalted Mantra as directed by the Pināka-bearing Lord.

6-8. Viṣṇu, the Lord with a delighted face, appeared before Pārvatī. He held the conch and discus. He had four arms and he wore a crown. He was dark-complexioned like a cloud. His eyes resembled lotus. He had the lustre of a crore of suns. He was seated on Garuḍa. The Lord pervaded the three worlds. He displayed (the mark) Śrīvatsa and (the gem) Kaustubha. He was clad in yellow silk robes. His large physical form was rendered brilliant by the refulgence of all the ornaments. He then addressed the fair goddess Pārvatī: "O goddess, welfare unto you. I am pleased. Do tell me what you desire."

Pārvatī said:

9. Grant me that pure blemishless knowledge whereby the return (to the mundane existence) does not take place.

* * *

1. The Japa of the Mantra "om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya" is Dhyāna Yoga.

On being told thus, Viṣṇu, the great Lord, spoke to the beloved of Hara:

10. "That Lord of the chiefs of Devas alone shall tell you undoubtedly. He alone is the immanent soul and the witness stationed within and without the physical body.

11. He is the creator and the protector of the universe. He renders all holy things holier and more sacred. He has neither a beginning nor an end or death. He is virtue and piety (*Dharma*). Indeed he is the Lord of virtue, piety etc.

12-13a. He is indeed the *Sakala* Brahman (Brahman with the attributes) which is to be meditated upon by the three syllables (A, U and M). He is unborn yet he takes up birth in the form of *Mūrta* (embodied) and *Amūrta* (unembodied). I am not authorised indeed to speak it to you."

13b. After saying thus the holy Lord who was delighted ceased to speak.

14. In the meantime, Śaṁbhu came to the hermitage of Girijā in an aerial chariot worthy of being desired by all. He was accompanied by all the groups of goblins.

15. The holy Lord Parameśvara was adored by her. A miracle then happened before the very eyes of the female companions.

16. After eulogizing the great Lord, Viṣṇu got merged into his (Śiva's) body. Then Parameśvara, Maheśāna spoke to Pārvatī:

17. He got into the excellent aerial chariot and said: "O lady of excellent holy vows, I am pleased with you, We shall go to a secluded spot where I shall narrate and explain to you the exalted refulgence."

18. After saying thus to the goddess joyously, he grasped the hand and gracefully helped her get into the excellent aerial chariot. Then he proceeded ahead.

19. They went to various mountains full of minerals of different kinds and having wonderfully variegated gems of diverse kinds. Rivers, streams, hedges and rivulets echoed the sweet cooing sounds of cuckoos.

20. He went to natural pools and lakes and those dug by Devas (filled in by rain) and then to rivers such as Gaṅgā etc. He showed to Pārvatī the sweet-smelling Kalhāra flowers tawny in colour and having a thousand petals.

21. He showed her Karṇikāra, Kovidāras, huge trees of Tāla, Hintālas, Priyaṅgus and Panasas.

22. He pointed out many Tilaka and Bakula trees in full bloom and the tawny-coloured fields shining with Kalama rice plants.

23-25. He went to the great Śara forest on the banks of the celestial river. It was full of the Śara reeds golden in colour. There were Kāśa flowers in full bloom. It was situated in a part of the land golden in hue and abounding in deer and birds having the splendour of fire. Standing on the top of the aerial chariot, he showed to his wife the hermitages of the sages who lived in perpetual celibacy on the banks. In the vicinity of the forest, Pārvatī saw the six Kṛttikās.

26-27. Those wives of Candra had concluded their ablutions and bedecked themselves. They were clad in clean robes free from dust. With palms joined together they said: "Who is this lady coming here for the sake of her son? O highly blessed lady, may this be told if he did come into your view?"

Pārvatī said:

28. How can it be? Am I fortunate enough to have a son, come on to my lap? Indeed, it is the misfortune of men that they do not get incessant happiness anywhere.

29. On hearing the word "son" I looked over and had the vision of you all, the blessed ladies. Why have you come here? May this be mentioned without delay.

The Kṛttikās said:

30. O fair lady, it is to give back your son kept (under our) protection that we have come on this Sunday during Cāturmāsya to take our holy ablution in the celestial river.

Pārvatī said:

31. O my companions, this is not the time for joke. May the truth alone be told. Mutual fun and frolic can be indulged in during *tete-a-tete*.

The Kṛttikās said:

32. O goddess, we are telling the truth to you. O ornament of the three worlds, take this boy from the centre of the cluster of reeds.

33. On hearing the words of the Kṛttikās, Pārvaṭī looked at the six-faced refulgent boy with trepidation.

34. He had the brilliant lustre on a par with ten million lightning streaks. His form was characterised by divine splendour. The boy of inordinate strength could be named as son of Gaṅgā, Fire-god as well as of the Kṛttikās.

35. Saying 'O my darling!', she joyously held up the child with her hands. She sat in the middle of the aerial chariot keeping the child on her lap and said:

36. "Live long. Be happy and delight your kinsmen." After saying this, she embraced her son closely and smelt the crown of his head.

37-38. Highly delighted she embraced the exaltedly refulgent boy glad in his heart. With a delighted mind, the unruffled son of the Kṛttikās joined his palms and bowed to Maheśvara. Then that aerial chariot speedily crossed the oceans and moved away.

39. It went beyond Jambūdvīpa that extends to a hundred thousand Yojanas. The ocean around it, namely the Salty Sea is twice that in expanse.

40. By the aerial chariot having solar splendour, they were taken to the Northern Kurus and thence to the Dvīpa glorified as *Kuśanābha*.¹ This Dvīpa is twice the ocean behind in size and it contains divine mountains and regions.

41. The Ocean of *Ikṣu* (sugarcane juice) is twice that Dvīpa in breadth. There is another Dvīpa twice *Ikṣu* in size.

42. The Dvīpa is named *Krauñca*. The aerial chariot went beyond the Dvīpa twice the ocean in size. The ocean *Suroda* (Sea of Liquor) is twice the Dvīpa in size and it is resorted to by *Yakṣas*.

43. The Dvīpa named *Śākadvīpa* is twice that in size. There is (i.e. It is surrounded by) an ocean twice its size. It is made up of clarified butter.

44. It is exceedingly tasty and Siddhas dwell all round. The Dvīpa named after the *Śālmālī* tree is twice that ocean.

45. An ocean twice that size is made up of *Dadhimaṇḍa* (curds-coagulated milk). *Sādhyas* live there invariably engaged in great austerity.

1. Probably the same as *Kuśadvīpa*.

46. The Dvīpa well-known by the name *Plakṣa* is twice that in size. *Kṣīroda* (Milk-Ocean) is twice the Dvīpa and great sages live here and there.

47. These six divine Dvīpas constitute what is cited as *Bhaumasvarga* (Earthly Heaven). There the ground is full of gold along with silver.

48. It fulfills cherished desires of everyone through the stones of honey-taste (*madhūpala-svāda*). It was seen (by Maheśvara). The wish-yielding Kalpa tree grows in the houses of men and women.

49. They yield heaps and heaps of clothes and ornaments and delight (all). O excellent Sage, these Dvīpas have significant marks.

50. Maheśvara crossed these Dvīpas, as he went through the sky. At the extremity of Plakṣadvīpa there is the Ocean of Milk twice it in size.

51. In the centre thereof is the great Dvīpa decisively known as Śveta. The hundred-peaked Rāmyaka mountain with unlimited number of trees is also there.

52-55. The aerial chariot was parked on a great divine peak thereof. Gold abounded there like sands. The place contained trees with nectarine fruits. There a platform paved with rocks milk-white in colour and embedded with jewels enclosed a highly splendid secluded spot. The Pināka-bearing Lord of Devas told a highly secret doctrine to Umā. Kārtikeya too listened to it. It was Dhyānayoga in the form of the twelve-syllabled Mantra. It was accompanied by Praṇava at the beginning. It is the ultimate (truth) of the Śruti.

Īśvara said:

56. It (the Mantra) is constituted of three syllables (A, U, M) but is one syllable (*Om*). It is imperishable. It befits the Māgha month. It is *Amāya* (free from deception). It sanctifies the whole universe.

57. Viṣṇu is the destination. Viṣṇu constitutes its centre. It had three constituent Mantras. It is attended upon by the entire group of Cosmic Eggs along with the *Turīyakalā* (a fourth digit).

58. It is worthy of being resorted to by sages free from desires. It is attended upon by Mahāvidyā etc. It pervades

everything from the navel to the cerebrum i.e. all the six Cakras (Yogic plexuses). It is the bestower of continuous, uninterrupted bliss.

59. The syllable Ōmkāra is an expression pleasing to you. It is destructive of great misery. It is in the form of knowledge and basis of happiness. This Praṇava should be meditated upon at the outset.

60. Realizing the omnipresent Brahman, an aspirant should purify the body, He should sit in the lotus posture and worship (the absolute) through the vision of knowledge.

61. He should keep the eyes half closed (in a bud-like form). The hands should be closely held together. In the process of meditation the auspicious Śiva should be thought of.

62-63. One will never be (a child) sucking breasts (i.e. will have no rebirth) after pondering over the Virāṭ form that resembles (shines like) streaks of lightning, that has the lustre of ten million suns. It is the Puruṣa that illuminates everything. It is enveloped by a hundred thousand moons. It shines as *Mūrta* (corporeal) and *Amūrta* (non-corporeal) forms. It is immutable and is in the form of *Sat* (manifest) and *Asat* (unmanifest). Meditation on it even for once during Cāturmāsya results in the destruction of sins.

64. A devotee should view my form in this manner, which is that of the enemy of Mura (i.e. Viṣṇu) too. Its prowess is never-failing in its qualities. It is enormous. Thereby he shall be competent for the destruction of sins originating from hundreds of births.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYTWO

Jñāna-Yoga Explained¹

Pārvatī said:

1. Let me know Jñāna-yoga after knowing Dhyāna-yoga. O Lord of Devas, see to it that I become immortal.

Īśvara said:

2. This king of Mantras called "the twelve-syllabled one" that has been already enunciated, should be practised for Japa, O lady of tender limbs. It is the essence of the Vedas and it is eternal.

3. Praṇava is at the beginning of all Vedic passages. It is that which initiates all the Yajñas in the Cosmic Egg (universe). It is at the beginning in all the rites. It bestows all the Siddhis.

4. It is white in colour. Madhucchandas is (its) sage (Seer). Brahmā is the deity. Gāyatrī identical with the greatest Ātman (is the metre). Its employment is in all holy rites.

5. This is the *Bīja* (ritualistic seed) identical with Brahman. The entire universe converges here. It is called the *Tattva* (essence) of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. It is of the form of *Sat* and *Asat*. It is immutable.

6. The syllable *NA* is yellow in colour. It is eternal and has *Jala* as its *Bīja*. *Ṛthvī* (too) is *Bīja*. *Manas* is the *Chandas* (metre). By due practical application it dispels poison.

7. The syllable *MO* has *Ṛthivī* (Earth) as its *Bīja* along with Viśvāmitra (as the sage). Its colour is red. It is highly refulgent. It gives wealth when duly employed.

8. The syllable *BHA* has five colours. It is eternal with *Jala* as the *Bīja*. It is associated with Marīci (as the sage). When worshipped it gives all worldly pleasures.

This chapter explains the mystic significance of every letter of the Mantra OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VĀSUDEVĀYA (vv 2-16).

vv. 4-16 State the colour (complexion), the seer or sage, the deity and the chandas or meter of each of the letters of the Mantra OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VĀSUDEVĀYA.

For the Nyāsa of the Mantra on one's own body see (vv 17-20). The whole chapter is full of Yogic occultism.

9. The syllable *GA* has red colour and the lustre of gold. It is accompanied by *Bharadvāja* (as sage). *Vāyu* is the *Bija*. It gives *Ādibhoga* (the primordial pleasure) to those who duly practise it.

10. The syllable *VA* is as white as Kunda flower (Jasmine). *Vyoman* (Sky) is the *Bija* and the syllable is highly powerful. Employed with due utterance of the sage and Mantrī (? the metre) it bestows salvation.

11. The syllable *TE* is a modification of *Vidyut* (lightning). *Soma* (Moon) is remembered as the great *Bija*. *Āngiras* (is the sage). *Ardhamūla* (half of the original) is to be avoided. It is to be desired in all the rites.

12. The syllable *VĀ* is smoke-coloured. *Sūrya* (Sun) is the *Bija*. It has the speed of mind. It is associated with *Pulastya* as the sage. When employed it grants all happiness.

13. The syllable *SU* is imperishable and is always refulgent like a *Japā* flower. *Manas* is the *Bija*. It is very difficult to endure. It is based on *Pulaha* (as the sage). It gives things to the suppliant.

14. The syllable *DE* is imperishable. Its *Bija* is in the form of *Hamsa* (swan). It has *Karbura* (variegated) colour. *Siddhi* is the *Bija* of great inherent strength in *Kratu* (Yajña). It has to be employed in *Kratu* (sacrifices).

15. The syllable *VĀ* is devoid of impurities. *Yajamāna* (the householder performing the Yajña) holds the *Bija* always. *Pracetar* (is the sage). *Śrī* is to be resorted to for salvation and it grants salvation.

16. The principle of Mahat is the *Bija* for the syllable *YA*. It is tawny-coloured. *Khecari* (is the *Mudrā*). *Bhūcari* is the great *Siddhi*. It is necessary to think about *Bhū* (Earth) always.

17. The ultimate rest is in *Bhṛguyantra* (the mystic diagram of *Bhṛgu*). It carries out all rites on being employed. The metre is *Gāyatrī*. The order of *Dehanyāsa* (ritualistic touch of the limbs) of these syllables is as follows:

18. One shall perform the *Nyāsa* of the syllable *OM* always (? everywhere) and that of *NA* on the two feet. The syllable *MO* is at the region of the privy and the syllable *BHA* is in the navel lotus.

19. The *Nyāsa* of syllable *GA* is in the heart and the syllable *VA* is in the middle of the throat. The syllable *TE* is in the right hand and the syllable *VĀ* is to go to the left hand.

20. One should perform the Nyāsa of syllable SU in the mouth and tongue, of the syllable DE in both the ears, of the syllable VĀ in both the eyes and of the syllable YA on the forehead.

21-22. The devotee then shows the *Mudrās* (hand gestures), viz. *Līṅga Mudrā*, *Yoni Mudrā* and *Dhenu Mudrā* one after the other and then all together simultaneously. After all these have been performed, O goddess, the devotee joins the *Bijākṣara* in the form of the Mantra everyday. He is not affected by sins. This group of the twelve syllables is the group of the twelve Līṅgas and syllables (?) resting on Kūrma (Divine Tortoise).

23-25. Twelve Śāligrāma pebbles alone are adored. Along with them these syllable also are to be meditated upon in accordance with the colours, sages and Bijākṣaras. The utterance in the assembly of the mode of application (*Viniyoga*) and the names of the metres shall adorn the Dhyāna, Japa and Pūjā. O excellent sage, that results in the salvation of the devotees from the bondages arising from Karmas. There is no doubt about it.

26. Indeed, this Yoga named after *Dhyāna* and *Karma* is very difficult to attain. I shall expatiate on Dhyānayoga once more. Listen with mental concentration.

27. The destruction of sins is brought about by Dhyāna Yoga and not otherwise. *Karmayoga* is undoubtedly a Yoga consisting of *Japa* and *Dhyāna*.

28. The twelve-syllabled Mantra originates from *Śabdabrahman* through the Vedic text. One gets everything through *Dhyāna*. One attains purity through *Dhyāna*.

29. The exalted Brahman is attained through Dhyāna. Union with *Mūrti* (image of the deity) takes place through meditation. The vision of Nārāyaṇa is *Sāvalambha Dhyānayoga* (Dhyāna Yoga with dependence (Dependent Dhyāna Yoga)).

30. A second (Dhyānayoga) with the entirety as the basis is glorified by Jñānayoga. Brahman is formless. It cannot be comprehended. It is always an omniformed refulgence incarnate.

31. It has the brilliance resembling that of ten million lightning streaks. It is unmutilated and ever risen (never sets).

It is either attributeless or endowed with attributes (It is both). It is (like) the expanse of clear (unsullied) firmament.

32. There is another aspect in the form of worldly pleasures. The personified one is one with agitated sense-organs and means of action. The permanent one is in the normal (quiescent) state. It is beyond the Tūryā and incomparable.

33. The Vairāja (offshoot of Virāt) is unborn. It is manifest cum-unmanifest. It is brilliant for ever. The manifold one arising from everything is conducive to the spread of virtue (Dharma). That which is *Nrvikalpa* (the incomprehensible? not admitting an alternative) has none superior to it.

34. The excellent one is *Agotra* (having no lineage). It is the cause of hundreds of Cosmic Eggs. It is devoid of desires and sense of possession. It is devoid of impurities. It is the form without even the intellect.

35. With your (spiritual)(refulgence comprehend the incorporeal Īśa who is free from opposing pairs. It is mere witness. It resembles the pure crystal. It is (existence) devoid of the distinction between meditator and meditated-upon. It is incomparable and unfathomable.

Pūrvatī said:

36. How is that perfect knowledge obtained? How can one attain Nārāyaṇa in the form of a Yogin? O Lord, tell me about *Amūrta* (incorporeal) Nārāyaṇa and his region.

Īśvara said:

37. The head is the most important of all limbs. The great (physical form) is held up by the head.

38. The Lord is adored with the head. (Then) the entire universe is adored. Yoga practice is held (done) through the head. One's power is held by means of the head.

39. The refulgence is held through the head. Life is stationed in the head. The sun is the head both of the *Amūrta* (incorporeal) and *Mūrta* (corporeal).

40. Chest is the world (called) the Earth. Leg is Rasātala (Nether-world). This is the characteristic feature in the Cosmic Egg in regard to the form of *Mūrta* and *Amūrta*.

41. Viṣṇu alone is the form of Brahman. He is himself the basis of Jñāna Yoga. He creates all living beings. He protects everything too.

42. Indeed, he destroys everything. He is identical with all the Devas. The Lordship of Viṣṇu over all the months is eternal.

43. Hence, one remembering Hari in all the days, in all the months, in all the Yāmas, becomes liberated.

44. Especially during Cāturmāsya, one becomes liberated through Dhyāna alone. Resorting to the Amūrta is extremely greater than Gaṅgā Tīrtha and the meditation upon it.

45. Undoubtedly, all Dānas during Cāturmāsya are esteemed. Sins committed during all the months are dispelled by the auspicious rites performed during Cāturmāsya.

46. Everything mentioned before shall be of everlasting benefit, O goddess. No doubt need linger in this matter. Therefore, by all means, Jñāna Yoga is excessively excellent.

47. The Lord, served in the form of Viṣṇu gives Brahman and salvation. O auspicious lady, listen attentively to the state of being stationed in Mūrta as well as Amūrta.

48. This should not be divulged to anyone and everyone, to one's own son or another's son, to one who has no self-control, to the wicked, to the fickle-minded one, to a hypocrite.

49-50. One should not discuss the subject of Yoga with one worthy of being censured, one who has dropped down from his own utterance (i.e. does not keep his promise). It should be offered to one of steadfast devotion, to one of self-control, to one possessing the quality of quiescence. It should be given to a devotee of Viṣṇu even if he is a Śūdra. The region (position) of Brahman is not (to be) narrated to an impure non-devotee even if he is a twice-born.

51. O lady ascetic, accept immediately, as a result of your devotion to me, the Yogic Siddhi. Understand that the great Nārāyaṇa is to be understood only through Jñāna (spiritual knowledge). He is Abhūta (free from elemental substances).

52. He is stationed in the head of all the embodied ones in the form of Nāda (Eternal Sound). He alone resides on the head of the individual soul like the solar disc.

53. The supreme Almighty, the Soul, is ever risen and subtle in form. But in a personified form he is led into (represented as) the Mūrta (idol). O goddess, he is attained through regular Yogic practice.

54. Indeed, all the Devas reside in the body of a Yogin. In the right ear the great rivers reside.

55. The Supreme Lord Śāmbhu is stationed in the heart. The eternal Brahṁā is in the navel. Pṛthvī (Earth element) is at the tip of the sole. The water element is present everywhere.

56. Tejas (Fire), Vāyu (Air) and Ākāśa (Ether) reside at the centre of the forehead. The five Tīrthas reside in the right hand. There is no doubt about it.

57. The Sun constitutes the right eye. The Moon is cited as the left eye. Bhauma (Mars) and Budha (Mercury) are cited as the two nostrils.

58. Guru (Jupiter) is in the right ear. So Bhṛgu (Venus) is in the left ear. Śaniścara (Saturn) is said to be in the mouth (face). Rāhu is proclaimed to be in the anus.

59-60. Ketu is mentioned as occupying the sense-organs. All the Planets (thus) occupy the body of a Yogin. (In fact) the fourteen worlds occupy the body of a Yogin and function always, O fair lady. Hence one should always practise Yoga, particularly in Cāturmāsya. (So) a Yogin dispels sin.

61. If a Yogin closes both the ears and performs Dhāraṇā (fixation) of the mind on the head, he undoubtedly is rid of all the sins.

62a. I do not see any difference between Viṣṇu and one who practises Yoga.

62b-63a. If in the house of anyone, at least one Yogin eats even a morsel of food, he certainly redeems three generations along with him.

63b-64a. If a Brāhmaṇa becomes a Yogin, O fair lady, he certainly destroys heaps of sins of all living beings through the mere vision.

64b-65a. If a Sacchūdra regularly performs holy rites and is engrossed in (the realization of) Brahman and also practises Yoga with devotion to a good preceptor, he also *attains* the benefit of *Amūrta*. worship.

65b-66a. A Yogin with strictly restricted diet practising meditation on the supreme Brahman especially during Cāturmāsya, will attain merger in Hari.

66b-67a. Just as iron turns into gold on being touched by the hand of a Siddha, so also the Mūrta. By the pleasure of Hari, a man attains dissolution (in Hari).

67b-68a. Just as the water of highway falling into Gaṅgā is

resorted to even by the Devas and also yields all benefits, so also the Yogin becomes the bestower of salvation.

68b-69. Just as fire blazed always through mere dried cowdung and then is glorified by Yājñikas (persons performing Yajñas) as the mouth of Devas, so also the Yogin becomes entitled to the attainment of salvation by means of continuous practice.

70. A goddess, this Yoga is always resorted to by the preceptors such as Sanaka and others who are masters and desirous of salvation. It bestows *jñānasiddhi* (perfection of knowledge).

71. At the outset, Yogins attain the perfect knowledge. O Pārvatī, the moment it is acquired, a Yogin becomes (well-equipped).

72. Thereupon, the Siddhis beginning with *Ānimā* (minuteness) present themselves to him directly. But the most excellent one among Yogins should not let his mind tilt to it.

73. Through Yoga, the merit accruing from performing all the Kratus and donating everything is acquired. All the cherished desires are attained through Yoga. Is there anything not obtained through Yoga on the earth?

74. *Hṛdayagranthi* (knot of perversion in the heart) is of course not created through Yoga. *Mamātā* (sense of possession) which is our enemy is not generated through Yoga. The mind of a Yoga-siddha cannot be carried off by anyone.

75. Only he is a Yogin without impurities, whose mind is firmly stationed within the head with all the pains rendered steady forever in the casket in the form of tenth door¹ (*Brahmarandhra*).

76. If a man closes his ears and attentively listens, he will hear the sound vibration. That is the tip of Praṇava. That alone is the eternal Brahman.

77. That alone is termed *Ananta* (unending one); that alone is the excellent *Amṛta* (nectar) this sound vibration in the breath at the nostrils, the great spot of the gastric fire.

78. This Pada (place) in the form of *jñāna* has five elements for its adode. After attaining the *Pada* there shall be the liberation from the bondage of birth and worldly existence.

1. Probably the metaphor is based on the body being called *Navadvārapura*

79. But its acquisition is very rare in the world, which gives perfection of Yogic power.

80. Thus the whole of the universe, mobile and immobile, appears identical with Brahman. This is the *Pada* called *Vijñāna*. That is Lord Viṣṇu himself who is the all-pervader. After realizing him as stationed in the head and as the greatest of the leading Yogins, like a serpent that sheds its slough, a creature (individual soul) sheds its slough of Māyā originating from the physical world.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYTHREE

Origin of Matsyendranātha¹

Īśvara said:

1. If a Yogin abandons Tāmāsa (evil) acts among all the acts and becomes one full of knowledge, he shall then be the bestower of salvation on all living beings.

2. When one acquires the feeling of non-attachment for one's body, when the mind is quite free from impurities and when there is full devotion towards Hari, one is not bound by Karmas.

3. When the mind of men remains calm and quiescent while engaged in (physical or mental) activities, there arises the Yogic Siddhi. There is no doubt about it.

4. A highly intelligent person attaining the status of Guru (Preceptor) and officiating as such frequently and one who has attained Viṣṇu-hood during his life time (while alive as an individual soul), is liberated from the touch (influence) of Karmas.

5. Routine and *Naimittika* (to be done on certain occasions) acts should not be pursued with a desire, for, if done with a desire, they tend to increase misery and distress.

1. This chapter records the legend of Matsyendranātha, the traditional founder of the Nāth Cult. Jñānadeva, in his famous commentary on the Bhagavadgītā, the Jñānēśvarī, confirms it. But the list of Siddhas from Tibet shows that Matsyendra is a Paramparā Śiṣya of Saraha (Śarabha) nātha (10th Cent. c.e.). The mention of Matsyendra shows that this portion of the Purāṇa was composed after one 10th century c.e.

6. O great goddess, understand that Viṣṇu is the master of Karmas. Abandoning all Karmas therein (i.e. dedicating all Karmas to Viṣṇu), one is liberated from the entire worldly entanglement.

7. This alone is the greatest knowledge, this alone is the greatest austerity. This alone is the most excellent welfare and felicity, that one dedicates one's Karmas to Kṛṣṇa.

8. This is known as the *Nirmala* (devoid of impurities) Yoga, based on the *Nirguṇa* (attributeless Absolute). It is the offering of auspiciousness arising from the activity to Viṣṇu.

9. The Pitṛs eagerly expecting the ritualistic balls of rice, roam about in their mundane existence only as long as a devout son is not born in the family.

10. *Dvijas*¹ roar, sin exists in the world and many Tīrthas have their utility only as long as one does not acquire devotion (to Viṣṇu).

11. He alone who is endowed with devotion to Hari, is the man of wisdom in the world; indeed he is the first among Yogins; he is the performer of great Kratus (sacrifices).

12. Moments pass on without winking and Yoga takes place. When speech is mastered by the Yogin, it is proclaimed as *Gomedha* (sacrifice of GO, cow, speech).

13. When he acquires control over mind, he attains the benefit of a horse-sacrifice. By a perpetual conquest (mastery) of *Kalpanā* (imagination, stray thoughts) he acquires the benefit of the sacrifice *Sautrāmaṇi*.

14-15. It is glorified as *Narayajña* (human sacrifice) as it involves the renunciation of the body. The sacrificial animals are the five sense-organs but they are not consigned to the fire. The earrings remain on the head. In accordance with the instructions of the preceptor he attains the status of Brahman. With the diet restricted, that Yogin holds the three Daṇḍas (Staff).

16. When the unsullied Lord is realized he (the Yogin) should be known as *Tridaṇḍin*. He has (the control of) the three Daṇḍas viz. *mano-daṇḍa* (the staff in the form of mind), *Karma-daṇḍa* (the staff in the form of Karmas, actions done) and *Vāg-daṇḍa* (the staff in the form of speech).

1. The reading '*Dvijāni*' is grammatically wrong. It can be emended as '*dvijās tu*' to make it grammatically acceptable.

17. Even as he continues to live that Yogin gets merged into the form of Brahman. It is the ignorant one who is harassed always through the Karmas that are of the nature of bondage.

18-22. The wise one indeed attains liberation even as he continues to do Karma here.

When he is led unto the region of Brahman by his Gurus (Preceptors) he attains liberation. Only the body stays (behind).

By the time the excellent Puruṣa proceeds on for the attainment of the *Brahmaphala* (fruit in the form of attainment of Brahman) the *Karmamayī Vṛtti* (tendency to indulge in Karma) shall be near in the Brahman Vṛkṣa. (Tree in the form of the Brahman). Other Parvans¹ should always be got known by sages (*obscure*).

It is by a synthesis of Śrutis and Smṛtis that the path to Mokṣa (should be known) by Dvijas.

This liberation is like a city having four gates (exits). The sentries there are the four attainments, Śama (self-control) etc. These alone should be resorted to by the men at the outset as they are the bestowers of salvation.

23. *Siddhi* (perfection, achievement) cannot be far from him who has acquired *Śama*, (quietude), *Sadvicāra* (good thoughts), *Santoṣa* (contentment) and *Sādhu Saṅgama* (association with good people).

24. O goddess, the attainment of Yoga by men is effected through devotion to Viṣṇu and the practice of excellent Dharma. It is said that this is sufficient knowledge (for the purpose).

25. A man moves around everywhere in the places of learning for the sake of (spiritual) wisdom, (but) the sudden emergence of knowledge through a good preceptor is free from impurities like the flame of a lamp.

26. It is certain that thousands of sins instantly get dissolved if one ponders over dissolution (absorption in Brahman?) even for a Muhūrta (short time).

27. Passion and hatred should be discarded. Anger and greed should be avoided. He should view everyone impartially and visit a devotee of Viṣṇu.

1. The original reading is probably Karmāṇi, the copyist seems to have confused Devanagari PA and KA.

28. A Yogin endowed with Śauca (purity) and Ācāra (excellent behaviour), in whose heart abides perpetual compassion for all living beings, never meets with misery.

29. These are the characteristics of Yogasiddhi: He is free from the massive coatings of Māyā (deception) and Ādhi (anguish). He is detached from unreal things. He shuns association with evil ones.

30. Contact with the fire of Mamatā (sense of possession—"This is mine" etc.) causes great distress to men when it arises. Subduing it when arisen, brings about peace of mind to Yogins.

31. The sense-organs should be sublimated by the mind itself and denied access (to the objects of pleasure). (They will then be keen) just like a piece of steel that when rubbed against another piece attains sharpness.

32. There are two types of intellectual proclivities in regard to the body. One pertains to the worldly objects. It should be discarded. That which is directed towards Parabrahman is auspicious. It is to be accepted and it causes purity.

33. O goddess, egotism causes sin and merit. If it is rendered steady, and not otherwise, it leads to the realization of the Tattva (eternal truth) that yields auspicious benefit.

34. The organ of generation is dark and impure, but if it transcends the worldly form, it yields weal. In both the ways, when it is retained within the heart or restrained in the head it is conducive to the liberation of one who is in bondage.

35. Thus the imperishable, unmanifest, immortal form of Viṣṇu, that which is one with all attributes has been told to you.

36. After realizing thus, a Yogin shall become liberated from the worldly bondage. A householder obtains it through the advice and guidance of the preceptor and not otherwise.

37. If the preceptor is pleased, the entire universe becomes pleased with him (the disciple). If the preceptor is rendered pleased by anyone, the Pitṛs and Devas too are rendered pleased by him.

38. These are the characteristics of the acquisition of salvation: the instruction of the preceptor, the image, good thoughts, the mind in poise and physical activity in association with perfect knowledge.

39. Viṣṇu alone is the Lord of Kriyās (physical activity,

sacred rites) though he himself is *Niṣkṛīya* (devoid of activities). He too is in the form of Praṇava, the *Bija* of the Mantra of twelve syllables.

40. The wheel of twelve-syllabled Mantra is destructive of all sins. It suppresses wicked ones and leads to Parabrahman.

41. This selfsame supreme Brahman having the pure twelve-syllabled form has been revealed to you, O goddess, in the *Skanda* (Purāṇa).¹

42. This is the essence to Yogins and is of the form of meditation. It can be assimilated only through devotion. One should ponder over it with faith during Cāturmāsya. After burning the sins incurred in the course of ten million births, the Enemy of Kaiṭabha shall bestow liberation.

Brahmā said:

43-44. In the meantime (Read *etasmīnnantare* for *etasmīnnagare* in the text) a great fish, hitherto unknown rose up from the centre of the Milk Ocean on the top of an aerial chariot. It had a mass of refulgence. Making movements with its chest and arms (fins?) it came near the presence (of Lord Śiva). He was without any egotism or pride.

45. While making a hissing sound, Lord Maheśvara saw that fish and benumbed it through his refulgence. He then spoke these words:

46. "Who are you stationed will in the belly of a fish? A Deva, Yakṣa or man? How do you live within the body? O Lord, tell me".

Matsya said:

47. I have been hurled into the belly of a fish in the Milk Ocean by my mother at the instance of my father: "This boy is unworthy of my family."

48. He was afraid of the destruction of the whole family. I was a child born in the Yoga (astronomical combination) named Gaṇḍānta. "Such a child cannot perform domestic duties. It will be the destroyer of its own family."

49. Thus I was cast off by my sorrowing mother. Though I am of the same family, I was seized by a fish. A great deal of time since then elapsed.

50. Thanks to your nectar-like words, the great *Jñānayoga* became known to me. Though you are *Amūrta* (incorporeal), I know you entirely as being corporeal as well.

51. O Lord of Devas, grant me permission to come out. O Lord, let me be seen by Bhavānī as *Pitr̥ṣa* (Protector of Pitr̥s?).

Hara said:

52. You are a Brāhmaṇa. You are in the form of my son. You are worthy of being worshipped by this one who speaks. You have been benumbed, O great fish. Come out quickly.

53. Thereupon, the fish that was undergoing suffering emerged headlong. He came out instantly with a distortion of his face.

54. He acquired beauty and intellect. His lustre now resembled that of the moon. Once stinking like, a fish, he now possessed divine fragrance.

55. When the son bowed down, Umā took him on her lap. Hara who was extremely delighted gave him a name.

56-58. "This most excellent one among Yogins was born from the belly of a fish. Hence, he will become well-known in the world as Matsyanātha.

He shall be endowed with human body which will never be split or cut. He will master *Jñānayoga*. He shall be devoid of rivalry, *Dvandvas* (mutually opposed pairs) and ambitions and hopes (*Nirāśa*). He will be a server of Brāhmaṇas. He will be a living liberated soul in all the fourteen worlds."

On being told thus, he repeatedly bowed to Maheśāna. Accompanying Maheśvara he went to the Mandara Mountain.

Brahmā said:

59-62. He circumambulated the goddess, embraced Skanda and went away.

After acquiring the excellent *Jñāna*, Pārvatī became delighted. She acquired the great Siddhi due to the power of Praṇava. The mother of the worlds acquired this Praṇava

through the watery medium of the twelve-syllabled Mantra.

He who listens to this origin of Matsyendranātha especially during Cāturmāsya shall obtain the benefit of a horse-sacrifice.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYFOUR

Tārakāsura Killed

Brahmā said:

1. Kārttikeya, the most beloved of Pārvatī, greater than her own life, plays about nearby. He is engaged in different kinds of (playful) activities.

2. He is highly refulgent with a red lustre and wonderful in his exploits. The Six-faced One sings loudly at will at some place and dances as he pleases in some other place.

3. He looks at his mother and father and stands bowing down humbly. Somewhere, on the sandy banks of Gaṅgā, he is found smearing his body with sand particles.

4. Accompanied by the Gaṇas, he is found searching about different kinds of trees in the forest. Thus five days passed off even as he played about.

5. Thereafter, Mahendra and other Devas who had fled due to the fear of Tāraka desired to catch hold of Tāraka. So they all eulogized Śaṅkara.

6. Through their Gaṇas the Suras made Kumāra their commander-in-chief on the (bank of) river Gaṅgā. The musical instruments (war drums etc.) of the Devas were sounded and there was shower of flowers.

7-8. The Fire-god gave him his Śakti and Himavān offered a vehicle. He was surrounded by crores of the groups of all the Devas. Kārttikeya bowed down to the groups of sages and proceeded ahead for battle with the enemies. At the city of Tāmravatī, the valorous one blew his conchshell.

9. On hearing the sound of the conch, crores of the soldiers of the Dānava came out from his city overwhelmed with distress and fear.

10. All the Devas were emboldened and encouraged by the brilliance of Skanda. They rode their respective vehicles. They

were proud due to their prowess, but they fought with self-control.

11. He (the Lord) moved down the armies of the Dānavas. Split by the discus of Viṣṇu, they fell on the ground in thousands.

12. Split and killed in hundreds, the Dānavas fell down everywhere, O sage. Rivers of blood of diverse forms began to flow.

13a. On seeing the army of Dānavas broken (routed), he fought in the battle (more vigorously).

13b-14a. The leader of Devas (i.e. Kārttikeya) immediately crushed the Daitya army with shower of arrows of various kinds.

14b. Gāṅgeya (Kārttikeya) fought with Tāraka. Directed by Kṛṣṇa he hurled his Śakti at Tāraka and reduced him to ashes along with his chariot and charioteer in a moment.

15. On seeing Tāraka killed, the remaining Dānavas went to Pātāla. Thereupon, all the groups of the Devas praised his valour.

16-17. The war-drums of the Devas were sounded. There was a shower of flowers. After attaining victory, all of them with Maheśvara at their head, crowned the Six-faced One as the Commander-in-chief of all the Devas. Choked with delight, Pārvatī embraced Skanda.

18. Surrounded by her female companions, she performed all the benedictory and auspicious rites. In this manner the boy killed Tāraka on the seventh day.

19. He then went to mountain Mandara. Filled with excessive joy, he delighted his parents by telling them everything.

20. At the proper time, Śaṅkara thought about getting a wife for him (Skanda). With a happy mind he spoke to Gāṅgeya of unlimited lustre:

21-22a. "O powerful one, the time suitable for your marriage has arrived. Get a suitable wife. This is your commonly approved duty. Sport about with different kinds of pleasures with aerial chariots that can go as you please."

22b. On hearing it, Lord Skanda spoke these words to his father:

23. "Everywhere, among all the Gaṇas, among the objects visible and invisible I am alone the person to be seen; what shall I accept? What shall I reject?"

24. All the women in the world are on a par with Pārvatī for me. O Lord of Devas, I view all the men like you.

25. You are my preceptor. Save me from getting submerged in Naraka. I am one by whom this entire knowledge has been attained completely unmutated, thanks to your grace.

26a. Let it not be that I submerge myself into the extremely terrible ocean of worldly existence.

26b-27a. A man holding light in his hand leaves it after seeing the desired object. Similarly, after attaining knowledge a Yogin leaves off the mundane existence.

27b-28a. O omniscient, supreme Lord, he is known as a Yogin whose activities recede after knowing the omnipresence of Brahman.

28b-31a. In the case of persons whose minds are covetous of sensual objects, they have attraction even while living in the forest. In the case of persons of equanimous vision indeed liberation is eternal even while staying at home. O Maheśāna, knowledge is very rare indeed, in the case of human beings.

By no means should a learned man lose the knowledge attained. Neither I am nor do I have a mother, a father or any kinsman. Having attained the knowledge I have realized separateness from the worlds.

31b-33. This attitude should be attained as a divine gift not as a result of your power.

It does not behove you to make a statement like this. Undoubtedly, I am desirous of salvation.

When the goddess was persistent and said so (about his marriage) repeatedly, he bowed down to his parents and went to the Krauñca mountain. There in a highly meritorious hermitage he performed the greatest austerity.

34. At the outset he brought all the sense-organs under his control by means of meditation. He performed the Japa of the greatest Brahman (i.e. *Mantra*) with the twelve syllables as the *Bijas*.

35-38. After echewing Mamatā (sense of possession) he attained Jñānayoga.

When the Siddhis beginning with *Aṇimā* (ability of becoming very minute) came to him unobstructedly he spoke these words angrily to the groups of those Siddhis:

"If you have approached me with wicked (evil) intention then (this is my assertion) that you will never afflict persons of quiescence on a par with us."

Even Maheśa, knowing the great rise (manifestation) of spiritual knowledge (in Skanda) said: "Skanda has attained through Jñānayoga more *Bhāva* (emotional steadiness)." On knowing this Maheśa was overwhelmed with wonder in his heart. He narrated to Pārvatī (everything)

39. Pārvatī was overwhelmed with grief over her son. Hara told Umā in nectar-like auspicious words the greatness of Cāturmāsya as being destructive of all sins.

40. If Maheśvara or the Enemy of Kaiṭabha (Viṣṇu) is retained in the heart by meditation, with the realization of non-difference and non-duality, he shall be the destroyer of the intense distress. Thereby, even an enemy shall become extremely affectionate.

Sūta said:

41. O Brāhmaṇas, thus the greatness resulting from (observances etc. in) Cāturmāsya has been narrated to you in detail. What other (topic) do you wish to hear?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYFIVE

Aśūnyaśayana-Vrata

The sages said:

1-2. The Vratas and Niyamas mentioned by you are numerous. They are to be observed when the Lotus-eyed Lord is asleep. There is no limit to their number.

How shall a man of delicate limbs observe these Niyamas in view of the weakness of his body? Or can charity be an alternative to that? Tell us.

Sūta said:

3. If anyone is of delicate limbs and if he is incompetent

to observe the Niyamas, the reputed Bhiṣma-pañcaka is to be performed by him.

4. O leāding Brāhmaṇas, he should get up early in the morning with mental concentration and purity, on the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika. Then he should brush his teeth.

5. Thereafter, with devotion to Vāsudeva, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, he should perform the Niyama representative of all the Niyamas mentioned before.

6. Fast is to be observed on that day with devotion. Or if there be weakness in the body he should give (as religious gift) gold according to his capacity.

7. *Haviṣyānna* (rice cooked in ghee) should be given to a Brāhmaṇa by those men who are devotees of Viṣṇu. This excellent Vrata should be observed for five days.

8. Hṛṣīkeṣa in the form of Jalaśāyin (one who lies in water) should be adored through scents, incense, food offerings and keeping awake during the nights.

9. On the arrival of the sixth day, the observer of the Niyama should adore with great devotion excellent Brāhmaṇas with garments, gold and delicious food.

10. He should then remain with palms joined in reverence and request the excellent Brāhmaṇas thus: "Thanks to your favour, all the observances have become (successfully) complete in my case."

11. Then the Brāhmaṇas should say: May (the credit of duly observing) this representative of Vratas and Niyamas pertaining to Cāturmāsya be entirely yours.

12. Thereafter, he sends those Brāhmaṇas away and takes food himself. O great king, anything can constitute his diet but *Pañcagavya* must be taken at the outset.

13. If anyone observes Vrata thus, he will earn much merit as a result thereof. He who undertakes this Vrata observing fast for five days, the benefit he gets is hundredfold.

14-18. The devotee performs Hari's worship on the eleventh day by means of Jāti flowers, on the twelfth day by means of Bilva leaves, on the thirteenth day with Śatapatrī (lotus) and on the fourteenth day by means of fragrant Kalhara flower with great devotion.

He should worship with the meritorious Bhṛṅgarāja flower

on the Full-Moon day. Janārdana should be worshipped with all these flowers on the Pratipad day.

For the sake of the purity of the body the devotee should take in all these on the Pratipad day: Cow's urine, dung, milk, curds, ghee and water mixed with Kuśa grass.

For the purpose of incense these are used severally (on the eleventh, twelfth etc.)—Aguru, Guggulu, Karpūra, Tagara and Tvacā and all these on the Pratipad day.

The Mantra for the offering of *Arghya* is as follows: "May the Lord, the original cause of the universe, lying on the watery expanse, resorting to the bed of serpent Śeṣa, accept this *Arghya* in order to facilitate the fulfilment of *Bhīṣmapaṇcaka*." With this Mantra, the *Arghya* is to be offered to the Lord devoutly.

19. Water in a conchshell along with flowers, sandalpaste and fruits should be offered as *Arghya*.

Paramāṇna (milk pudding) should be offered as *Navedya*, O Brāhmaṇas. It should be offered in accordance with one's capacity.

20. Thus the *Vrata* called *Bhīṣmapaṇcaka* has been entirely described to you. The fruit of the *Vratas* is obtained along with that of the *Niyamas*.

The sages said:

21. The *Vrata* named *Asūnyaśayanī Vrata* has been described by you as was performed earlier by Indra, for the propitiation of the sleeping Discus-holding Lord, O highly esteemed one.

22. At what time should it be performed? By what procedure? Hence, O Sūta, describe its procedure in detail.

Sūta said:

23. On the second day after the Full-Moon in the month of Śrāvaṇa, when there is the asterism Viṣṇu-Daivata (i.e. Śrāvaṇa) a devotee should get up in the morning, O leading Brāhmaṇas. He should not talk to sinners, barbarians and fallen ones.

24. At mid-day he should take his bath and remain clean, wearing washed cloth. Approaching Jalaśāyin (Lord Viṣṇu) he should worship the Lord reciting this Mantra:

25-28. "O Lord having the mark Śrīvatsa, O Consort of Śrī, O Śrīdhāman (abode of glory), O immutable Lord of Śrī, let not my Gārhaṣṭhya (state of being a householder) be ruined. It yields virtue, wealth and love.

May the Pitṛs be not destroyed. May the sacred fires be not extinguished. May the deities be not destroyed through my default in the practice of Dāmpātya (state of being a married householder).

O Kṛṣṇa, just as you are not separated from Lakṣmī at any time, so also, O Lord, may there not be the destruction of my association with my wife.

Just as your bed is never bereft of Lakṣmī, so also let not my bed be bereft (of my wife) in the course of every birth."

29. Having prayed thus, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the devotee honours a Brāhmaṇa in accordance with his capacity. He shall avoid *Vittaśāṭhya* (villainy or dishonesty in regard to money in giving Dakṣiṇā).

30. In this same manner, the devotee should worship Acyuta, the Lord of universe, lying in the watery expanse in the months of Bhādrapada, Āśvina and Kārttika.

31. The diet should be without salt and oil should be excluded. At the conclusion, the devotee offers (these) to a leading Brāhmaṇa devoutly:

32. A bed is given along with garments, grains and food. Gold is to be offered as monetary gift. He attains the benefit in the same manner.

33. If the devotee perfectly observes this Vrata with concentration and mental purity, Jalaśāyin, the preceptor of the universe, shall be pleased with him.

34. He will be pleased with him, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, in the same way as he was pleased formerly with Śakra. His bed shall never be empty in the course of any birth.

35. The devotee shall dispel all the sins committed in the course of eight months knowingly or unknowingly. Thanks to the *Aśūnyaśayanavrata*, all (evil) gets destroyed.

36. If a woman without a son, or a woman who has only one child, or a widow observes this Vrata with concentration, the Lord of the universe becomes pleased with her and bestows bodily purity.

37. Her intellect never turns to evil. Her intellect is not at all overwhelmed by lust.

38. If a virgin perfectly observes this Vrata, O Brāhmaṇas, she obtains a noble-born handsome husband from a noble family.

39. If a devotee without any specific desire observes this Vrata with concentration, he shall get the benefit of the Niyamas pertaining to Cāturmāsya.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYSIX

Greatness of Śivarātri

The sages said:

1-2. Important holy places have been heard (described) and so also the origins of those shrines. It was made clear that a man who takes his holy bath there scrupulously obtains the benefit of all the Tirthas.

Now, O highly esteemed one, describe to us all those Liṅgas, the important ones which, when seen (visited), grant the benefit of seeing all the Liṅgas.

Sūta said:

3-4. There is that highly auspicious Liṅga named Maṅgaṇa; so also, there is Siddheśvara along with Gautameśvara. A fourth Liṅga is glorified by the name Kapāleśvara. Each of these grants the benefit of all the Liṅgas. There is no doubt about it. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, (they should be visited and adored) in accordance with the injunctions laid down.

5. There I shall describe the benefit accruing from Maṅgaṇeśvara, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, that of the Liṅga containing the syllable MA.

6-7. O Brāhmaṇas, at the advent of Śivarātri a man should observe fast and remain pure. He should also keep awake during the night. Hara himself says that there is no doubt that he will have the benefit resulting from a visit to all the Liṅgas.

The sages said:

8. O highly esteemed one, when does Śivarātri occur?

Describe to 'us in detail everything regarding the mode of worship and the greatness.

Sūta said:

9. The fourteenth lunar day of the dark half of the month of Māgha (is auspicious)..The night thereof is termed Śivarātri.

10. On that night Hara always extends his presence over all the Liṅgas. Especially, the night at Maṅkaṇeśvara is well-known amongst all the meritorious (shrines).

The sages said:

11. How did Śivarātri come into being? By whom was this laid down? Why has it become a giver of many benefits? Describe everything to us in detail.

Sūta said:

12. In this context I shall narrate to you an event that occurred earlier, the dialogue between Bhartṛyajña and King Aśvasena.

13. Formerly, there was a monarch of Ānarta remembered by the name Aśvasena. He was pious and righteous always. He had mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas.

14. On seeing the (evil) period of Kali on the increase day be day, Aśvasena asked Bhartṛyajña thus in all earnestness:

Aśvasena said:

15. O excellent sage, suggest unto me some Vrata proper for the period of Kali. It should be highly meritorious and destructive of all sins, but should involve very little effort or strain.

16. O Brāhmaṇa, men have always been of short span of life formerly even in Kṛtayuga, Tretāyuga and Dvāpara and still more so at the advent of Kaliyuga.

17. Hence, exclude all the Vratas extending over a year. Tell me something covering only a single day.

18. One should carry out tomorrow's work today itself, the work of afternoon in forenoon. The god of Death does not wait to see whether his (victim's) work is completed or not.

19. On hearing his words Bharṭṛyajña of exalted intellect and liberal mind, meditated for a long time and spoke after knowing it through his divine vision:

Bharṭṛyajña said:

20. O great king, there is an auspicious Vrata called Śivarātri Vrata. It lasts for only one day; O king, it destroys all sins.

21. If anything is given as a gift on that day, if a Homa is performed, and if Japa is practised, all these shall have everlasting benefit. The devotee should keep awake during the night.

22. (As a result thereof) one without a son shall obtain sons, one without wealth shall get wealth, one of a short span of life will obtain longevity and also the destruction of his enemies.

23. A man shall obtain all desired objects in view of which he observes the Vrata. If he be desire-less, he attains Mokṣa (liberation from Saṁsāra).

24. If one observes the night vigil giving some money (even) in a niggardly spirit, one is undoubtedly rid of the sins committed during that year.

25. On that night, Lord Hara extends his presence unto all the Liṅgas, both mobile and immobile ones.

26. Therefore, it is called Śivarātri. It is a favourite of Hara. With a desire to bless all the worlds he was requested by all the Suras:

27-29. "O Lord, during this age of Kali full of all kinds of sins, do go for a day to the earth for the purification of the sins of the year, so that by performing your worship mortals may attain purity.

Thereupon, what is given and what is offered as oblation to fire by them shall come unto us. If men offer *Ucchiṣṭa* (leavings of food), that entirely goes to waste.

O Śaṅkara, nothing offered by impure men during the period of Kali comes to us even if it be ample and plentiful."

Śrī Bhagavān said:

30. . O Lord of Suras, on the fourteenth lunar day in the dark half of Māgha, I will go to the earth in the Kali age during the night and not by the day.

31. Undoubtedly, I will move over to all the *Līṅgas* mobile and immobile for the purpose of purifying sins committed during the year.

32. On that night, O excellent one among *Suras*, a man who performs my worship by means of these *Mantras* shall be free from sins:

33. "Om, obeisance to *Sadyojāta*. Om, obeisance to *Vāmadeva*. Om, obeisance to *Ghora*. Om, obeisance to *Tatpuruṣa*. Om, obeisance to *Īśāna*." The devotee should worship these faces thus by means of scents, flowers and fragrant pastes as well as garments, lamps and food offerings.

Then Meditating on me as stationed in the mind he should offer *Arghya* after worshipping me with this *Mantra*:

34. "O Lord of *Devas*, O lover of *Gaurī*, O moon-crested one, O primordial one among all, may the *Arghya* be accepted for the purpose of purifying all the sins committed during the year."

35. Then he should honour a *Brāhmaṇa* with food, garments etc. Without resorting to miserliness, monetary gift has to be made liberally.

36. There should be narration of religious stories along with dances of graceful as well as *Tāṇḍava* type.

37. O *Sureśvara*, if anyone observes the *Vrata* thus for the purification of sins committed during the year, it shall be the proper atonement.

38. On hearing this all the *Devas* bowed down to the Moon-crested Lord, O most excellent one among men. With great delight they went to their respective abodes.

39. In order to enlighten people always in regard to *Śivarātri*, they sent *Nārada*, the greatest sage, to the earth.

40. He too went to the earth and proclaimed everywhere the greatness of *Śivarātri* as narrated by the Trident-bearing One.

41. Ever since then there came into vogue on the earth, the meritorious *Śivarātri* that grants all the cherished desires and destroys all sins.

42. In this connection I shall relate unto you all, the story of an incident that happened long ago to a fowler in the *Naimiṣa* forest.

43. There was a fowler who was so only by birth and not

through mere activities of his caste. His mind was overwhelmed by indulgences (in vice). He stole other's wealth.

44. He was one who never observed a Vrata, practised charity or performed Japa. The only work he did was to take away other people's money by fraudulent means.

45. Once it was the holy night of Śivarātri in the dark half of the month of Māgha-Śivarātri that destroys all sins.

46. There was a holy shrine of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas. Many people had just started the vigil at night.

47. O tiger among men, the place was filled by women adorned by excellent ornaments. Seeing that people were keeping awake, the thief thought thus:

48-49. 'I shall go there and see if I can get at some woman well-adorned with ornaments coming out of that mansion. Then I shall kill her, snatch the ornaments and get away.'

50. After resolving thus mentally, he approached the shrine. Climbing up a Kaṇṭikāra tree, he hid himself there.

51. He was watching the different quarters from where there was the possibility of some woman coming out. The fellow who was thus ready to commit robbery was very severely distressed due to cold.

52. He could not sleep even for a wink. Nor was there any sign of any woman coming out. There was a Liṅga beneath the tree. It had sprung up from the ground. He went up, plucked a few leaves and threw them over the Liṅga.

53. In the meantime, there rose up in the sky the sun of hot rays, who never causes happiness to unchaste women, thieves and lustful persons.

54. Then the men and women bowed down to Maheśvara. After rendering the services to the Lord, they became quiescent and went to their respective abodes.

55. Having lost all hope and becoming distressed due to hunger and cold the thief got down from the tree by some means.

56. After a long time he met with his death. He was reborn in the palace of the ruler of Daśārṇa. He could then remember the previous birth.

57. All this was due to the power of his fast and vigil kept under duress on the Śivarātri day as well as to the adoration of that Liṅga.

58. After inheriting the great kingdom of his father and grandfather, he got a great and splendid mansion erected over the Liṅga.

59-60. Every year on the Śivarātri day he used to come there, observe fast and keep awake during the night singing and playing on musical instruments, listening to religious discourses and narration of pious stories. He used to adore reciting the Mantras cited before and offer *Arghya* in accordance with the injunctions. He then propitiated Brāhmaṇas by giving them whatever they desired. Thereafter, he used to return to his abode.

61. Once, on the Śivarātri day, Śāṇḍilya and other sages came to the mansion of that Liṅga.

62. They were Śāṇḍilya, Bharadvāja, Yavakṛita, Gālava, Pulastya, Pulaha, Gārgya and many others, O king.

63. King Bṛhatsena, son of the ruler of Daśārṇa, also came there for the observance of vigil in front of the Liṅga.

64. After adoring the Lord, and bowing down to the leading sages, he sat before the Liṅga with the permission of the excellent Brāhmaṇas.

65. Then, O king, they held various discourses and religious dialogues, and told and listened to especially the stories of ancient saintly kings and Brāhmaṇa-sages who had passed away.

66. Then at the conclusion of a certain discourse, he was asked by the expounders of the Vedas whose curiosity had been aroused and whose eyes shone remarkably due to wonder:

67. "O king, urged by curiosity, we are inclined to ask you something if only you will speak out the truth, as you are in the holy shrine."

The king said:

68. O leading Brāhmaṇas, if I know I will undoubtedly speak it out. Now asked in the presence of the Lord, I take a solemn pledge to tell the truth.

The sages said:

69. Having refused to make a number of abundant religious

gifts instead, merely for keeping a vigil, you have come over here from your native place.

70. This occurs every year. Indeed you know the purpose and reason thereof. O king, if it not be a closely guarded secret, do tell us about it.

Sūta said:

71-72. The king was rather moody. He vaguely smiled under chagrin and said: "O excellent Brāhmaṇas, indeed this is a great secret not to be divulged ordinarily. Still I shall tell it since I have been asked in the presence of the deity."

73. Then he disclosed everything that happened in the previous birth of the thief on the night of Śivarātri.

74. He mentioned to them how he had to keep awake though with an intention of committing theft and how he had to refrain from taking food without the direct adoration of the Lord on the Śivarātri day.

75. He told them how he was reborn with the power of recollecting the previous birth. Thereupon, all the sages expressed the warmest appreciation in diverse ways.

76. After congratulating the saintly king, the most excellent king, they bestowed their benedictions on him. After keeping awake during the night, they went to their hermitages.

77. The king too duly worshipped the deity and honoured the excellent Brāhmaṇas. Afterwards he kept awake during the night and returned to his city.

Bharṭṛyaṇa said:

78. It was thus, O king, that Śivarātri came into vogue on the earth. The greatness of it has been already described to you.

79. Hence, O excellent king, that should be observed with all efforts, particularly in Kali Age, by one who wishes for his own prosperity.

80-81. This was observed by Dilipa, Nala, Nahuṣa, Māndhātṛ, Dhundhumāra, Sagara, Yuyutsu and others who entertained perfect faith. Of course they attained their cherished desires both divine and human.

82-83. Similarly, it was observed by goddesses Śrī, Sāvitrī,

Sītā, Arundhatī, Sarasvatī, Menā, Rāmbhā, Indrāṇi, Dṛṣadvatī, Svadhā, Svāhā, Rati, Pṛiti, Prabhāvatī and Gāyatrī, O excellent king. All of them attained their cherished objects along with greatest conjugal felicity.

84. If anyone reads about this benefit in the presence of Śiva with devotional fervour, he shall undoubtedly get rid of the sin committed that day.

85. There is no Tīrtha on a par with Gaṅgā; there is no other Lord comparable to Śiva; there is no penance greater than Śivarātri. It is the truth that has been uttered by me.

86. Meru is full of all Ratnas (jewels); penance is full of all miracles. O king, Śivarātri has been glorified as being full of all righteousness (Dharma).

87. Just as Garuḍa is the most important one among birds, just as ocean is the chief of all rivers, so also the observance of Śivarātri is the most important one among all holy rites.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYSEVEN

Importance of Tulā-puruṣa-dāna¹

Sūta said:

1-3. Hence, O great king, this Śivarātri is to be observed by a wise man desirous of getting the benefit of both the worlds.

Ānarta said:

The greatness of Maṅkaṇeśvara has been listened to by me in its detail along with the celebration of Śivarātri as has been glorified by you. Now do describe to me entirely the glory of Siddheśvara in detail. O highly esteemed one, my eagerness is great.

1. This is a Mahādāna. In this the donor is to weigh himself against gold or silver in the other pan of the balance and distribute it to Brāhmaṇas. For details see *Matsya P.* ch. 274. See also Hemādri's *Dāna Khaṇḍa*.

Bhartryaṇṇa said:

4. O king, there is a Mahādeva shrine well-known as Siddheśvara. Its origin has been listened to by you from my statement.

5. Now I shall tell you the fruit of a visit to that deity. It is the same as accrues to an emperor when he makes a gift of his entire kingdom.

6. The gift called Tulāpurusa (donating gold or silver equal to one's own weight) there, is being praised, O king. One who desires imperial power over the entire earth should make such a gift.

Ānarta said:

7. O great sage, tell me in detail the procedure for the *Dāna* called *Tulāpurusa*, that has been so glorified.

Bhartryaṇṇa said:

8-10. The proper time for Tulapurusa-dana is the event when a solar or lunar eclipse occurs, the two main transits of the Sun take place, the equinoxes and the waning of the Moon (i.e. the New Moon) occur. People praise the gift of Tulapurusa in a holy spot.

The said gift is to be made to Brahmanas of great self-control, good people who regularly practice the study of the Vedas, O king. They should be free from defects. The gift is not to be restricted to a single individual at all. It should be distributed among many.

11. A beautiful pavilion should be constructed by a wise person (the donor). It should be sixteen hands in extent. The place selected should be holy and pure and level with a declivity towards the north-east.

12. The *Vedi* (Altar) should be made in the centre. Its width should be four *Hastas* (hands), and the height, one *Hasta* of the donor.

13. Four Kuṇḍas (holy pits) should be dug in the four quarters. Each of them should be four *Hastas* in depth and one *Hasta* in girth.

14. On the north-eastern corner a splendid *Vedi* should

be made. It should have a width of a *Hasta* and the height should be one *Ratni* (half of a *Hasta*, a span).

15. Two *Ṛtviks* should be placed in each quarter. They shall be posted in due order viz. two *Bahvṛcas* (*Ṛgveda*), two *Adhvaryus* (*Yajurveda*), two *Chândogas* (*Sāmavedins*) and two *Ātharvanas*).

16. The *Homa* to deities should be performed by them silently and with great concentration. O king, they should perform *Japa* in accordance with their capacity with *Mantras* signifying their purpose.

17. Two pillars are to be erected to the south and the north of the *Vedi*. The pillars should be four *Hastas* above the ground and they go down to one *Hasta* in the ground.

18-19. In the middle thereof one should fit in a log very firmly. This log should be of the same timber as that of the pillar. Eight different types of timber are recommended much for the purpose of a pillar, O excellent king, viz. *Candana*, *Khadira*, *Bilva*, *Aśvattha*, *Tinduka*, *Devadāru*, *Śrīparṇī* or *Vaṭa*.

20. The balance should have two pans and it should be placed therein. The devotee should have had his bath. He must be clad in white garments. He should wear garlands of white flowers and smear himself with white unguents.

21. At the outset he must adore the Guardians of the Quarters around in due order. Thereafter, he should worship the pillars with sweet scents, garlands and unguents.

22-23. O excellent king, he should adore the balance too and then recite the *Punyāhavācana Mantras*. The householder then keeps all his weapons on his person, stands at the western extremity (pan); facing the East with great faith with the palms joined in reverence he should utter this *Mantra*:

24-25. "It is the daughter of *Brahmā* resorting permanently to the greatest truth. It is *Kāśyapī* by lineage and is well-known by the name *Tulā*.

O *Tulā*, you are the very truth by your very name. I shall make my desire auspicious. Be pleased now and be present."

26-27. Thereafter, he gets on to one of the pans. O excellent king, he then places on the other pan what he has already thought of and collected together to the extent of his capacity for the purpose of the gift.

28-29. He then mentally approaches (thinks of) the deity loved remaining on the pan itself. He then drops a little water along with gingelly seeds, raw rice grain and gold in accordance with injunctions for the deity. He then gets down and distributes everything to the Brāhmaṇas.

30. Listen with attention to the fruit that is going to be obtained.

31. By the power of the *Dāna*, this man gets rid of all the sins committed (by him) knowingly or unknowingly.

32. O excellent king, as a result of the *Puruṣadāna* only that much of the sin already committed earlier is dissolved.

33. The *Dāna* pertaining to the weighing in the balance has been enjoined as *Puraścaraṇa* (preparatory rite) in the case of lordly ones afraid of physical strain.

34. This was performed by Dilīpa, Kārtavīrya, Pṛthu, Purukutsa and other kings as well, O king.

35. This *Tulāpuruṣadāna* is destructive of all torments. This is praiseworthy and meritorious. It grants to men all their cherished desires.

36. One will never have anxieties and ailments. Widowhood is averted. There will never be misery due to sickness. O excellent king, one will never be separated from one's kinsmen. This has been cited as the fruit of offering *Tulāpuruṣadāna*.

37. O excellent king, it is impossible to express adequately the benefit that may accrue in Kali Age when *Tulāpuruṣadāna* is performed.

38. If a devotee approaches Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti, O king, and offers it before Lord Siddheśvara, the benefit is thousand-fold.

39. Hence, a man of discrimination should perform *Tulāpuruṣadāna* by all means after approaching Lord Siddheśvara.

40. On one side are all the Tīrthas, all the shrines, mentioned by the Self-born Lord in the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara, and on the other is Siddheśvara, the most excellent of all Suras. O excellent King, if he is seen, touched and adored, the man obtains the benefit of all (in the manner) glorified.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYEIGHT

Description of Pṛthvī Dāna¹

Ānarta said:

1. Do tell me how and by what rite and act in the mortal world do men attain emperorship that is destructive of all enemies.

Bhartryajña said:

2-3. It is difficult to attain the rulership of the earth on account of all sorts of sins. If at all one becomes the ruler of a kingdom by means of austerities, restraints, Dānas and other auspicious Vratas, one should then make a gift of the earth made of gold with perfect faith, before Lord Gautameśvara. One shall then become an emperor certainly. So says Pitāmaha.

4. Māndhātṛ, Dhundhumāra, Hariścandra, Purūravas, Bharata and Kārtavīrya—these six were the emperors of the world.

5. It was due to the gift of Pṛthvī formerly in the presence of Gautameśvara. They made a gift of the earth made of gold and then became imperial monarchs.

Ānarta said:

6. O holy Sir, what is the procedure whereby the earth is to be gifted over? I will certainly make Dāna of the earth. I entertain a great faith therein (that Dāna).

Bhartryajña said:

7. O excellent king, a (globular symbol of the) Earth should be made with a hundred *Palas* of gold, or with a half thereof or if one's capacity is less the replica is made with twenty-five *Palas*.

Pṛthvidāna or *Dharādāna* is another *Mahādāna*. It is described in the *Matsya Purāna*, Chapter 284. Another name of this Dāna is *Himadharādāna* which means gifting a symbolic gold replica of the Earth, which is to be prepared with recitation of certain prescribed verses. Half of that gold is to be given to the preceptor and half to other Brāhmanas.

8. In regard to the Dāna called *Dharā-dāna*, O great king, one should avoid *Vittaśāṭhya*, i.e. dishonesty in spending money for the rite.

9. Anyway no less than five *Palas* should be used. The devotee should mark there (on the replica) in separate areas (cavities) the seven great oceans namely those of salt, sugar-cane juice, liquor, ghee, curd, milk and water.

10. Then the continents of *Jambū*, *Plakṣa*, *Kuśa*, *Krauñca*, *Śāka*, *Śālmali* and *Puṣkara* and the seven rivers and oceans should be marked, each of the continents and oceans being double the previous one.

11. Then should be marked the seven *Kulaparvatas* viz. *Mahendra*, *Malaya*, *Sahya*, *Himavān*, *Gandhamādana*, *Vindhya* and *Śrṅgi*.

12. In the centre the devotee shows *Meru* and the *Viṣkambhas* (the supporters i.e. adjacent mountains) in four directions (these were supposed to prop up Mount Meru). Similarly he shows the trees *Jambū*, *Nyagrodha*, *Nīpa* and *Plakṣa*.

13. *Gaṅgā* and other rivers should be shown there prominently. This concludes the building up of the replica of entire earth in gold, O king.

14. Thereafter, he sets up a pavilion as was done before (in *Tulāpuruṣadāna*).

15. Arched gateways, etc. should be made, *Kuṇḍas* for the adoration of the *Brāhmaṇas* and the planets. After doing everything as before (in the *Tulāpuruṣadāna*) a *Vedi* (altar) is made in the centre.

16. There the donor should place the (replica of the) earth after bathing it in *Pañcagavya* with the prescribed *Mantras* as well as their *Līṅgas* (signs or marks). Then, it is bathed in pure water.

17. The *Mantras* are those beginning with *īmam me gaṅge yamune* (RVX. 155), *pañcanadyaḥ* (VS 34.11), *tripuṣkaram*, *śrīśukta*, *pāvamāna* and *haimi*.

18. All these *Mantras* are very much relevant to the rite of ablution. "It shall be the excellent and tastiest base." (*obscure*)

19. After bathing in this manner, the devotee recites *yuvā suvāsā* Mantra and covers (the replica) with different kinds of cloths of delicate fabric.

20. After reciting the Mantra beginning with *ye bhūtānām adhi* (*Vāi-sam* 16.59) the devotee worships. With great concentration he offers incense reciting the Mantra *dhūrasī*.

21. Reciting the Mantra *agnih pyotih* etc. he performs *Ārātika* (waving of the lights). The seven kinds of grain are offered reciting the Mantra *aham aymī* etc.

22. After performing all these things, the householder (donor) clad in white garments stands before it (the replica of the Earth) with palms joined in reverence. He should recite these Mantras:

23-25. "O Earth, this whole universe including both mobile and immobile beings is being supported by you. I am making a gift of you. Be present (here).

O goddess in the physical bodies of all living beings, you are the fifth element. Then follow other elements like water etc.

Those who make a gift of you do get you back once again. There is no doubt about it. They do so by assuming a royal form here or hereafter."

26. After eulogizing thus, O king, the devotee takes up the golden replica and water. Retaining Vāsudeva in the heart, he recites this Mantra:

27. "By the gift of this (replica) let Janārdana be always pleased. He is the creator of the world by whom the Earth was lifted up from Pātāla."

28. After saying this, the devotee pours the water in water itself, not on the ground, nor into the hand of the Brāhmaṇa, O excellent king.

29-30. Thereafter, the devotee ritualistically sends away the goddess by means of the following Mantra partially:

"You duly came and you have been adored in accordance with the injunction. For the sake of our welfare you have done so. Now, may you be pleased to go wherever you wish." Thereafter, the Mantra *usrā veda* etc. is recited and gift articles are distributed among the Brāhmaṇas.

31. Thus, everything regarding the excellent gift of Pṛthivī has been described to you. Let this be heard that the donor shall become a king in every birth.

32. If a king, O king, makes the gift of the Earth as per this procedure, there shall never be any case of dethronement in his family.

33. If kings are being seen dethroned, then it means that the Earth has never been gifted by them to Brāhmaṇas of controlled selves.

34. Hence, (a king) should make the gift of *Pṛthvī* by all means. None shall take away the Earth given over to others.

35. This excellent gift of *Pṛthvī* is meritorious and praise-worthy. O great king, even to those who listen to this it shall be destructive of all the sins of those bodies.

36. Let alone the actual gift of *Pṛthvī*, O king. Even prompting someone to make the gift is destructive of masses of ignorance.

37-39. By the power of this gift, a man becomes handsome, graceful, pleasing to look at and one endowed with sons and grandsons. He shall be rid of mental anguish and physical ailments. He becomes intelligent and wise. O great king, those who become (kings) like this shall joyously rule over the kingdom without hindrance. They attain the eternal and blemish-free region of Viṣṇu. If the gift is made elsewhere too they shall become emperors also.

40-41. What is perfectly gifted before Lord Gautameśvara, O excellent king, shall be effective for the duration of seven rebirths. There is no doubt about it. Hence by all efforts gift of Earth should be made, O king.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYNINE

Greatness of Kapālamocaneśvara

Sūta said:

1. O Brāhmaṇas, let the greatness of Kapāleśa be listened to now. O highly esteemed ones, it is the fourth deity stationed in that holy spot. As soon as it is listened to, the man is rid of sins.

The sages said:

2-4. O highly esteemed one, of the four Liṅgas mentioned earlier, the origin of three has been heard by us excepting

that known as Kapāleśvara. Tell us what fruit can be derived by visiting and adoring it.

Sūta said:

5. Formerly, this deity named Kapāleśvara was installed by Indra for the purpose of riddance from the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter.

6. It was by its power, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, that Surasreṣṭha (the most excellent one among Suras i.e. Indra) was rid of that sin. This Vedic passage is heard: "The sin (is eradicated) by the gift of Pūruṣa.'

7. Any man who adores that (deity) with great devotion and gifts away the Pāpapurūṣa to a leading Brāhmaṇa for the purpose of purity, is liberated from the terrible sin arising from Brāhmaṇa-slaughter.

8. Brhaspati went to Hātakeśvarakṣetra and approached Dakṣiṇāmūrti. Looking at that deity Śaṅkara, he spoke thus:

9. "A devotee who goes to the holy spot of Hātakeśvara, visits the deity Śaṅkara and offers a form (*Puruṣa*) made of gold by him, is liberated from all earlier sins. There is no doubt about this."

The sages said:

10. O Sūta, how did the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter befall Surendra (Indra)? Do narrate this fully. We are very eager.

11. How did the Lord named Kapāleśvara get installed here? How did the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter of Divaspati (Indra) get destroyed by its power?

12. O Sūta, what is the procedure whereby the *Pāpapurūṣa* should be gifted? By means of what Mantras and by means of what supplementary articles should it be given?

13. What benefit accrues to men by visiting and worshipping the deity even without offering the *Pāpapurūṣa*? Do mention what the benefit will be attained solely through the adoration.

Sūta said:

14. I shall describe unto you all this ancient legend, on

hearing which, O highly esteemed ones, a man is rid of all sins.

15. The sins may have been committed knowingly or unknowingly in the course of the previous births. Merely by visiting the deity, one is liberated from the sin committed on that day. There is no doubt about this. It is the truth that has been told by me.

16. Formerly, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Vṛtra, a very powerful son, was born to Tvaṣṭṛ of Vibhāvārī, the daughter of Puloman.

17. Even as a boy, he was a pious soul, a favourite of all the people. He had completely eschewed the characteristic trait of a Dānava. He was eagerly engaged in devotional activities towards Brāhmaṇas.

18. He went to the holy forest of Puṣkarāraṇya and engaged himself in a great austerity. By means of deep meditation, he propitiated the Lotus-born Lord of Devas.

19. Brahmā was pleased with him and came directly within his vision. He said: "I am the bestower of boons. What purpose of yours shall I carry out?"

Vṛtra said:

20-21. O Lord, if you are pleased with me, grant Brāhmaṇahood to me. Having attained Brāhmaṇahood, I shall achieve the greatest region. Being endowed with Brāhmaṇical power, there shall be nothing unattainable to me. It appears to me that there is nothing unattainable to me. It appears to me that there shall be nothing on a par with a Brāhmaṇa.

22. There is no greater divinity than a Brāhmaṇa. Hence nothing else remains (cherished) within my heart, not even mastery over the three worlds.

Sūta said:

23. On hearing his words, Pitāmaha was pleased within him. Awarding to him the status of Brāhmaṇa, he spoke courteously:

24. "Dear son, you have been converted to Brāhmaṇahood by me. Do whatever you wish to. Always propitiate Brāhmaṇas, the most excellent ones among the knowers of Brahman.

25. With Brāhmaṇas rendered delighted, all the Devas become pleased. Hence excellent Brāhmaṇas should be adored with all efforts."

Sūta said:

26. On being told thus by him, Vṛtra became a Brāhmaṇa. Endowed then with the Brāhmaṇical glory, he became very earnest in maintaining celibacy.

27. When he was engaged in austerities, Dānavas were killed by Indra. It came well nigh to the extermination of the noble-souled Dānavas.

28. On being defeated and harassed by Suras, all those Dānavas became miserable and grief-stricken and they abandoned their original abode.

29-30. They approached him (Vṛtra) with his mother at their head. On seeing his mother in such a plight surrounded by the defeated Dānavas, he said: "What is the purpose of your coming to me in such a miserable state?"

The Dānavas said:

31. We have been defeated and harassed by Devas. We are seeking refuge in you. Where else can we go? We have none to offer succour except you.

32-33. On hearing their words Vṛtra said respectfully, "I shall slay the Devas. Go there without delay.

Tell me now, O mother, the purpose of your arrival."

The mother said:

34. O highly esteemed one, hasten to get yourself tied to (married) a wife for the sake of the increase in the family, if you consider my words sufficiently authoritative.

35. This alone is the greatest Dharma. This alone is the greatest strategic step that the son carries out the suggestions of his mother with great concentration.

36. Just as in the case of women, there is no deity unto them on the earth other than their husbands, so also as long as the mother is alive, there is no other deity for a son.

37. If a woman transgresses her husband and apparently pretends to be righteous, all her actions become fruitless.

There is no doubt about this.

38-39. If a son transgresses the instructions of his mother and engages himself in pious rites as he pleases, all those rites become futile as in the case of a Homa performed on ashes, or of cries in wilderness, or of sowing seeds in an arid land.

40. Even an act of piety performed by a son in direct contravention of his mother's instruction, is like a musical note played before the deaf and graceful dance in front of the blind.

41. All the rites are so. There is no doubt. Therefore, I have come to you, O dear son, at the instance of the kinsmen. I am all the more distressed.

42. Of what avail are repeated importunities in your case, dear son? Listen and carry out my suggestion so that the freedom from indebtedness to Piṭṛs can be accomplished.

43. Dear one, if my words are considered authoritative by you, do so.

On hearing her words Vṛtra thought this mentally:

44. 'In accordance with the path laid down in the Śrutis and Smṛtis, there is nothing greater than one's mother.'

He therefore assented promisingly and brought a bride.

45. Tvaṣṭṛ was highly pleased. He gave innumerable gems as well as endless number of precious and base metals.

46. He was coronated in his position (as the king) with ample wealth in the treasury and numerous elephants, horses and vehicles in the army. Endowed with great prowess and further strengthened by means of Brāhmaṇahood, (he became the king) of Dānavas.

47-48. On hearing that Vṛtra had been crowned in his own kingdom, the kinsmen of Vṛtra, the Dānavas who had earlier left the city returned from Pātāla, from the mountain fortresses as well as the level ground fortresses. They were extremely angry because of their enmity with the Devas.

49. Encouraged by all the Dānavas, that mighty one set off towards the abode of Mahendra in order to destroy their enemies.

50. On hearing that Vṛtra was on his move towards him with a desire to fight, Śakra became delighted and accompanied by all the Devas he started from heaven to face him squarely.

51. Thereupon, there was a fight between Devas and Dānavas on the extensive highlands of Meru day and night.

52-56. Everyday Devas suffered defeat at the hands of Dānavas. Then Guru (Bṛhaspati) said: "O Śakra, O ruler of Devas, do not fight.

This Vṛtra is very terrible in battle possessing two types of powers, the four Vedas at the forefront and the bow fitted with arrows at the back.

With this, the Daitya is sure to defeat you in the great fight. Hence, O Consort of Śaci, enter into a deceitful alliance (peace) with him.

Thence as he becomes confident, kill the Dānava with your *Vajra* (thunderbolt). It is the injunction of the scriptures that the enemy could be killed by means of six expedients.

When he is taking food, when he is lying (relaxing), by giving one's daughter (or a girl), employing a Brāhmaṇa bribed (for the purpose) and by taking a solemn vow—by resorting to deceitful tactics (one should kill one's enemy), so you follow this. "

Indra said:

57. If it is to be so, do go yourself and win his confidence. At your instance, the Dānava will certainly become trustful.

Sūta said:

58. Having understood the view of Śakra Bṛhaspati set off to the place where Vṛtra, the Daitya, was stationed with his resolve to fight.

59. On seeing that Bṛhaspati himself had come, Vṛtra who had always been a devotee of Brāhmaṇas, became glad in his heart. Bowing down before him specifically, he spoke these words loudly:

Vṛtra said:

60. Welcome to you, O excellent Brāhmaṇa; what shall I do? Command me. Since Brāhmaṇas have always been dear to me speak out now (anything you may desire).

Bṛhaspati said:

61. O excellent one, since victory in battle is doubtful, as it is controlled by fate, do enter into an agreement (of peace) with Mahendra at my instance.

62. You rule the entire earth. Let Śakra rule heaven. You should abide by this agreement always.

Vṛtra said:

63. O Brāhmaṇa, I shall carry out your suggestion for ever. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, get me in touch with Śakra now.

Sūta said:

64. The liberal-minded Bṛhaspati brought Śakra and brought about a mutual accord with Vṛtra.

65. After having been principal enemies, both of them, the rulers of Daityas and Devas, turned into fast friends and they joyously went to their respective abodes.

66. Of course, Śakra was always seeking an opportunity to employ deception but he did not find any loophole, though he was diligently looking for it.

67. Sometimes with great difficulty, Purandara did get at a vulnerable point but he got scorched by his refulgent prowess.

Indra said:

68. I am unable to look at that Daitya at all, since he is enveloped on all sides by a brilliant refulgence. How can I slay him?

69. Hence suggest some means to me to facilitate slaying him by enabling me to bear the brilliance of that wicked-souled one.

Sūta said:

70. On hearing his words, Bṛhaspati meditated for a long time. Then he said to Śakra who was standing humbly by:

Bṛhaspati said:

71. O Purandara, a Brāhmanical splendour envelopes his body. Hence, O Lord of Devas, you cannot look at him.

72. Hence I shall tell a means whereby you will easily kill that excellent Dānava.

73. On the banks of Prācīśarasvatī, there is a Brahmana sage named Dadhīci. He is a hundred Yojanas tall. He resides in the Puṣkara forest.

74. Performing penance there he continuously eulogizes Pitāmaha. O Hari (Indra), the excellent sage is fed up with (the fact of) clinging to life.

75. This sage of pretty long existence has already become overwhelmed with marks of old age. Go to him quickly and request him for his weighty bones.

76. He will give up his life though very dear to him, and undoubtedly place the bones at your service. With his bones the weapon named *Vajra* can be fashioned.

77. It shall be your never-failing weapon. You will certainly slay Vṛtra. The refulgence of that Vajra, being evolved out of Brāhmanical splendour, will counteract and subdue the refulgence of Vṛtra.

Sūta said:

78. On hearing it, Śakra hastened to the Puṣkara forest in the company of all the groups of Devas. It was there that Prācīśarasvatī flowed.

79. The river had thirty-three crores of Tirthas within it. The hermitage of Dadhīci was nearby. It was full of miracles. Śakra entered the hermitage.

80. Serpents sported about there along with mongooses there and both were happy in company. So also deer were happy with lions and cats with mice.

81. Crows resided side by side with owls without any mutual hatred due to the power of the penance of the noble-souled Dadhīci.

82. On seeing that Devas had come with Śakra at their head, Dadhīci became highly delighted and came directly before them immediately.

83-84. Then he took the *Arghya* in his hands and bowed

to him repeatedly. He then said to Śakra, the guest: "What task of yours can I carry out? You have come to my house, O Lord of Devas. Tell me quickly."

Indra said:

85. O great Brāhmaṇa, render hospitality unto me. O excellent sage, I have come to your house. Give me unreservedly your own bones.

86. O great sage, it is for this alone that I have approached you. Something great has to be wrought out of your bones. It will facilitate achieving the purpose of Devas.

Sūta said:

87. On hearing those words of Indra, Dadhīci became happy and satisfied. Then he said to the Thousand-eyed One who was accompanied by all the Devas:

88-90. "Indeed, there is no one on the earth as meritorious as me, because the Lord of Devas has himself come to my house seeking something.

Blessed indeed are my bones, O Lord of Devas, which will do some good unto you. Everything should always be done for the sake of the protection of the Heaven-dwellers.

Here I am willing to surrender my very life for your sake. Accept my bones as you please, O Purandara, for the realization of your own purpose."

91. After saying thus, the great sage resorted to meditation immediately. He let off his vital airs through the *Brahmarandhra* (cerebral aperture) and gave up his body.

92. Bereft of the soul, his body fell down on the ground instantly, O excellent Brāhmaṇas.

93. In the meantime, Śatakratu (Indra) collected together his bones and then respectfully addressed Viśvakarman:

94. "With these bones you fashion out quickly the weapon *Vajra* wherewith I can immediately slay *Vrtra*, the most excellent one among *Dānavas*."

95. On hearing his words, Viśvakarman hurriedly made the weapon named *Vajra*, terrible in its very form.

96. It had six *Aśris* (sharp edges) and hundred knots with

the middle slender and depressed. It was terrible. He gave it to the intelligent Thousand-eyed One

97. Seizing the weapon that had the lustre of twelve suns (Indra stood ready for his mission) on coming to know through spies that Vṛtra was performing the Sandhyā rites and was in deep meditation.

98. The king of the three worlds stood behind him and in his eagerness to kill him, he hurled the Vajra at him.

99. Struck down with the Vajra, the Dānava was reduced to ashes, but Śakra did not know that he had been killed. In his great fright, he fled away from the spot.

100. He fled to a far-off place devoid of human beings. He hid himself in a rugged cluster of bushes and hedges. Śakra imagined that the entire universe was filled with Vṛtra.

101. In the meantime Devas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Gandharvas who had been searching for Śatakratu (Indra) all round, came there.

102. With very great difficulty they espied Śakra lying amidst the hedges in a deep forest. He was found extremely terror-stricken.

The Devas said:

103. Why are you afraid, O Thousand-eyed One? This Vṛtra has been killed by you along with his entire family. We have ourselves seen him.

104. Come out from this place, O Purandara. We shall go homewards. Now that the thorn (Vṛtra) has been dislodged, you can rule the domain of the three worlds.

105. On hearing their words, Śatakratu came out from the middle of the bushes. On coming to know that Vṛtra, the excellent Dānava, had been killed he experienced a thrill with hairs standing on end.

106. Even as all the Devas were looking at Śatakratu, his body lost all its lustre and began to stink with a bad odour.

107-110. On noticing this, Brahmā, the preceptor of the worlds, said to all those Devas: "This Śakra has now been infected (and defiled) by the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. Since Vṛtra who was Brāhmaṇa has been killed by him through

deception, he should be shunned from afar. Otherwise you will also incur the sin.

The contact with a Brāhmaṇa-slayer as well as a dialogue with him causes sin in men. Hence he should be abandoned and kept at a distance. Let alone the personal touch or dialogue in particular, they say that even his mere sight causes all sins in men."

Sūta said:

111-113. On hearing the words of Brahmā and seeing his own body bereft of all brilliance and vitiated by badly stinking odour, Śakra spoke to the Lord of the worlds with shoulders stooping down in wretched despair: "O Lord, I am a mere servant unto you. I have been assigned the office of Indra by you. Hence grant me the favour of destroying the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. O almighty one, do suggest a means of expiation whereby purity can be gained."

Śrī Brahmā said:

114. O Slayer of Bala, You have to take your bath in the sixty-eight Tirthas. Give away a gold replica of yourself called *Pāpāpūruṣa*.

115. Reciting the Mantras as mentioned before the gold replica is to be given to a noble-souled Brāhmaṇa after taking your bath in the sacred water, all the while saying, "I am a Brāhmaṇa-slayer."

116. As soon as you have had your bath (the Kapāla-skull of Vṛtra) shall fall down from your hand. A bright refulgence will cover your body and the bad odour shall vanish.

117. O Śakra, that Kapāla is to be installed by you in that Tirtha. Thereafter, it should be worshipped by you under the name Maheśvara.

118. The adoration shall be done with the recitation of the five Mantras of the five faces.¹ Thereafter, the golden replica of your own body should be given to a leading Brāhmaṇa. Then you will regain your purity.

119. On hearing the words of Brahmā of unknown birth, Śakra took up the skull of Vṛtra and set off on his pilgrimage.

1. Viz. sadyojātam prapadyāmi etc. (*Tait. Āraṇyaka* 17.1).

120. After visiting the sixty-eight Tirthas, the Lord of Suras came to Hātakeśvara Kṣetra in due course.

121. When he came out of Viśvāmitra Hraḍa after the holy ablution, the skull of the slain soul (Vrtra) dropped down automatically by itself.

122. Then he adored it with recitation of the holy Mantras pertaining to the faces (i.e. *sadyojātam prapadyāmi* etc.) that destroy all sins, and that are very meritorious as mentioned by Brahmā earlier.

123. In the meantime the stinking odour vanished from his body, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. A great refulgence appeared instead.

124. Then on coming to know that the Lord of all the Suras has been relieved of the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, Brahmā came there along with the Devas.

Śrī Brahmā said:

125. O most excellent one among Suras, Your blemish caused by the Brāhmaṇa-slaughter has vanished. Make the gift of gold for the purpose of purifying the vestige of the sin.

126. Let the skull of Vrtra adored by you along with the recitation of the five Mantras of Lord Śiva's five faces be installed here itself.

127. Then you shall devoutly make the gift of your own body made of gold in accordance with the injunctions along with the recitation of the relevant Mantras. Your sin, the entire sin that may have been committed by you, shall be dispelled on making the gift to a Brāhmaṇa:

128. On being told thus in the presence of the Suras by Brahmā, Śakra said, "So it shall be" immediately and made the gift of the *Pāpapiṇḍa* (*Pāpa-pūruṣa*).

129. It was made of gold and given to a noble Brāhmaṇa hailing from Gartātīrtha. He was a Brāhmaṇa who maintained the sacred fires and was called Vāta.

130-131. In the meantime, that Brāhmaṇa was despised by Nāgaras saying, "Fie upon you! O sinner, the Vedas that were mastered by you earlier are worthless and futile. Since the Dāna of the *Pāpapiṇḍa* has been accepted by you, you will never have any association with us hereafter."

132. Thereupon, that Brāhmaṇa, hailing from the family of Upamanyu, well-known by the name Vātaka (Vāta) turned pale in his face and said:

133-136. "O Śakra, it was the Pāpapiṇḍa of yourself that has been gifted by you. Out of consideration for you I have accepted the Pratigraha.

O most excellent one of the Suras, I did not take it on account of greed. But, even as you have been witnessing, I have been rebuked by all these Brāhmaṇas, the residents of Nagara. So I will not take this Pratigraha from you.

I will hand this back to you. If you do not accept it I shall invoke a terrible Brāhmaṇical curse on you to contract the terrible disease of *Kṣaya* (Wastage—Tuberculosis)."

Indra said:

137. If a Brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas and the *Angas* (of Vedas) accepts a Pratigraha, he is never smeared with sin like a lotus-leaf that is never contaminated by water.

138. Hence, listen to my words. You incur no sin. Since you have been censured by these Brāhmaṇas hailing from Nagara (I shall lay down these injunctions).

139-141. You will be the chief in all the rites of these. The sons and grandsons of these (Nāgaras) shall undoubtedly be guided by the behests of these i.e. your sons and grandsons.

But, O Brāhmaṇa, even the least of a rite of theirs without your permission shall be futile like the *Homa* performed on ashes. This Tirtha will become well-known by the name *Kapālamocana*.

142. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, those men who remember this skull installed by me and perform Śrāddha shall become liberated. If they remember this particularly in the Śrāddha *Pakṣa*, they will attain the greatest goal.

143-144. The Brāhmaṇas born of your family shall marry a girl from the family of the Brāhmaṇas other than those of this locality. Yet with my favour, they shall be entitled to preside over all the rites in Nagara.

After saying thus the Thousand-eyed One vanished.

145. With the money received as Pratigraha, Vāta (the Nāgara Brāhmaṇa) erected a palace unto the Trident-bearing Lord of Devās.

146-147. Then Śakra told those Brāhmaṇas hailing from Nagara: "If anyone takes his holy bath in *Kapālamocana* and worships the Lord, his sin arising from Brāhmaṇa- slaughter definitely vanishes. One that incurred great sins (*Mahāpātaka*) shall become sinless."

148. He promised "So it shall be" to the Brāhmaṇas hailing from Nagara. He built his hermitage there itself and adored Śaṅkara.

149. Ever since then, the Nāgaras who lived there performed whatever rite they had to perform at his instance.

150. It was for this reason that the second *Madhyaga* came to be established.

151-152. Thus the narrative that is destructive of sins has been entirely recounted to you. It pertains to the deity Kapāleśvara and those men who listen to it or recite it become sinless. Their sin will be destroyed like the sin of the chief of Devas, the noble-souled Indra. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, their sin will be destroyed like the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter of Indra.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTY

Making Gift of Pāpapiṇḍa

Ānarta said:

1-2. If a man commits a sin out of foolishness, inadvertence, lustfulness or lethargy but does not expiate, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, then what could be a meritorious rite to destroy his sin and also help him attain salvation. Do tell me this, if you are pleased with me, O holy Sir.

3. O great sage, tell me the procedure for offering *Pāpapiṇḍa* if one who offers it is greedy or deluded. I also intend to offer the same very soon.

Bhartr̥yājña said.

4. One should offer a gold replica of one's own body weighing twenty-five *Palas*.

5. The image (replica) should be made in the later half (i.e. dark half) of the month. It should be bathed duly. After erecting the *Mandapa* etc., the devotee takes his bath and wears washed clothes. He remains clean.

6. The man who has committed the sins should adore elements constituting the body e.g. *Prthvī* etc. as his own form. He is liberated from the sin committed by those respective things (i.e. *Prthvī* etc.)

7. O king, the devotee should adore the *Pinḍa* with the names of the twenty-four *Tattvas* (constituents) beginning with *Prthvī* (Earth) ¹

8. "Om, obeisance to *Prthvī*. Om, obeisance to *Ap*. Om, obeisance to *Tejas*. Om, obeisance to *Vāyu*. Om, obeisance to *Ākāśa*. Om, obeisance to *Ghrāṇa* (nose). Om, obeisance to *Jihvā* (tongue). Om, obeisance to *Cakṣus* (eye). Om, obeisance to *Tvak* (skin). Om, obeisance to *Śrotra* (ear). Om, obeisance to *Gandha* (odour). Om, obeisance to *Rasa* (taste). Om, obeisance to *Rūpa* (colour). Om, obeisance to *Sparśa* (touch). Om, obeisance to *Śabda* (sound). Om, obeisance to *Vāk* (speech). Om, obeisance to *Pāṇis* (hands). Om, obeisance to *Pādas* (feet). Om, obeisance to *Pāyu* (anus). Om, obeisance to *Upastha* (the organ of generation). Om, obeisance to *Manas* (mind). Om, obeisance to *Buddhi* (intellect). Om, obeisance to *Citta* (thinking faculty). Om, obeisance to *Ahaṁkāra* (ego). Om, obeisance to the *Kṣetrātman* (individual soul). Om, obeisance to *Paramātman* (the Supreme Soul)."

The incense is offered with the Mantra *dhūrasī* etc. The lamp is offered with the Mantra *agnirjyoti* etc. Thereafter one offers garments with the Mantras *yuvā suvāsa* etc.

9. Then a Brāhmaṇa is invited. He should be one who has mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. His feet should be washed and he should be offered garments.

10-11. His body should be adorned with bracelets, armlets, rings and other ornaments. Then the image is to be

1. The *Tattvas* mentioned in v 8 are mainly the 24 *Tattvas* enumerated by Sāṅkhyas plus the supreme soul, God or Brahman which the Sāṅkhya-*Kārikā* does not recognize.

brought. It should be offered to the Brāhmaṇa with this Mantra:

12. "O Brāhmaṇa, this, my own body in the form of gold (image), is given to you. Whatever sin was committed by me formerly may be yours now entirely." This is the Mantra for the Dāna.

13. Then, O king, the Brāhmaṇa accepting the Dāna should utter this Mantra.

14. "Whatever sin has been committed by you earlier has been taken over by me in the form of this image. So you are rid of sins." This is the Mantra for *Pratigraha*.

15-16. After making the gift in accordance with the injunctions, the devotee bids farewell to the Brāhmaṇa. After doing thus, O king, and after offering the monetary gift, if the Brāhmaṇa is satisfied, he takes away the sin. If that is concluded, O great king, there shall appear evidence of riddance of the sin instantly.

17-18. The body becomes light. There is increase in brilliance. At night he sees persons with contented minds in dream. He sees men and women clad in white garlands and unguents. He sees white cows and ballocks and horses and various kinds of Tīrthas.

19. Thus, everything regarding the Dāna of *Pāpapaṇḍa* has been narrated to you entirely. O great king, even if this is listened to one is rid of sins.

20. In other holy places also the great gift of *Pāpapaṇḍa* shall dispel sins, O king.

21. But the sin dispelled shall be only what is committed in the course of a single birth by one's own body. But the rite performed in Kapāleśvara Deva shall dispel the sins thousand times over.

22. The *vedi* and *Maṇḍapa* are to be erected as before. But the Homa is to be performed only through (*Japa* of) Gāyatrī, O king.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYONE

Creation of Seven Liṅgas

Sūta said:

1-6. There is another very meritorious set of seven Liṅgas there. By visiting, honouring and worshipping them particularly, a man becomes long-lived and free from ailments.

One of them is Lord Maheśvara called Mārkaṇḍeśvara. Another Lord Indradyumneśvara, Hara, who dispels all sins. Similarly, Pāleśvara is the destroyer of all diseases. Then there is the famous of Ghaṇṭaśiva installed by Ghaṇṭa. The Lord named Kalaśeśvara is conjoined with Vānareśvara. The deity called Īśānaśiva is Kṣetreśvara (Lord of the chiefs of the holy spot). On being worshipped devoutly, the Lord fulfils superhuman wishes. Even after the advent of Kali Age, he bestows everything desired mentally.

The sages said:

7. Who is this person named Mārkaṇḍa by whom the Liṅga was installed? O Sūtaja, tell us who this king Indradyumna was.

8. So also who is this person named Pālaka by whom Hara was installed? In which royal family was born the person named Ghaṇṭa?

9. Who was this well-known person named Kalaśa accompanied by Vānara? Who was this Īśāna? Describe everything. Our eagerness is great

10. Also describe that which will do good to men. Then tell the story of those excellent men by whom these deities were installed.

11. So also, O Sūtaja, describe their activities, power etc. Recount the procedure of Dāna with their proper occasion and let the Mantras pertaining to them be known in detail.

Sūta said:

12. I shall tell you the ancient legend narrated to king Ānarta by Bhartṛyajña himself.

13. If this is listened to, a man shall become long-lived. By its power, one does not meet premature death.

14. The sin-destroying (legend about the) origin of the deity mentioned at the outset, well-known as Mārkaṇḍa has already been narrated to you.

The Legend of Indradyumna¹:

15. Now, O excellent Sages, I shall narrate the story of Indradyumna, what his family was, what his power was and how he was honoured by all the kings.

16. O excellent Brāhmaṇas! Formerly there was a king named Indradyumna. He was a patron of Brāhmaṇas. He offered succour to all. He was a protector of good people. He used to perform Yajñas. He was a great donor. He was efficient and engaged in everything beneficial to all living beings.

17. There was no famine, no epidemic, no ailment and no fear caused by thieves to any of the people, when that righteous king was ruling.

18-19. Just as the streams of downpour during rains are numerous, just as the stars in the sky are innumerable, just as sand-particles on Gaṅgā are numberless so (innumerable) were the Yajñas performed by him. All of them were completed with full monetary gifts. He performed Agniṣṭomas, Atirātras, Ukthas and Śoḍaśikas.

20-21. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, with his mind sanctified by faith, he performed many Paśuyajñas, Sautrāmaṇis, Cāturmāsya, Vājapeyas, Āsvamedhas, Rājasūyas, Paundarikas and others.

22. Many gifts were made by him, particularly in holy spots. Delicious foodstuffs were served to leading Brāhmaṇas along with monetary gifts.

23. On the whole of the earth, there is not a single town or city or holy spot where a temple (erected by him) did not find a place.

24. Many thousands, trillions and crores of virgins were given in marriage to Brāhmaṇas in need of wealth by him.

1. This legend is practically a repetition of the same legend in Mbh, Vana, Ch. 199. Camatkārapura is not known to Mbh. It is the pro-Nāgara turn given by this Purāṇa.

25-26. On the Daśamī day (the tenth lunar day) at night would be beaten his big wardrum installed on the back of an elephant and taken around the entire city, which proclaimed. "At daybreak it shall be the sin-destroying day of Viṣṇu. All, excepting the aged and children, should observe fast. If anyone takes food I will punish him."

27. That saintly king Indradyumna went to Brahmaloka with the same physical body due to the favour of Viṣṇu.

28. At the end of a thousand Kalpas, he was told by Brahmā himself: "O Indradyumna, go to the earth. Now you cannot stay here."

Indradyumna said:

29. Why do you drop me down hurriedly from your world, O Brahmā, though I am devoid of any sin. O Lord of Devas, tell me the reason.

Srī Brahmā said:

30-32. Your glory has come to an end today on the surface of the earth. A man can stay in heaven only so long as his renown remains on the earth. It is for this reason that people inscribe their names on holy temples, tanks, wells and lakes they construct or dig. Hence, go back to the earth. Renew your glory and renown if you desire a long stay in this world.

33. Even as the great king surveyed himself, he found that he had instantly reached the city of Kāmpilya on the earth.

34. Then he asked the people: "What is this city? What is this land? Who is the king? What are the towns and cities?"

35-36. But they simply replied. "This is the city well-known as Kāmpilya. The land is called Ānarta¹ and the king here is Pṛthivījaya.

But who are you please? Why have you come here? Have you any specific purpose? Tell us."

1. Kāmpilya, (modern kampil) is in Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh and not in Ānarta. The author wishes everything to bring to Ānarta unless there existed another city of the same name in Ānarta.

Indradyumna' said:

37. Formerly, there was a king named Indradyumna in the city of Rocaka in the land Vaijaruka. Where is that land? Where is that city?

The people said:

38. We do not know that city, nor the land nor that king named Indradyumna about whom you are asking, O gentle Sir.

Indradyumna said:

39. Is there any aged person here, of long life, who might have known that king, land or city? Tell me quickly.

The people said.

40. It is heard that there is a great sage named Mārkaṇḍeya in the Naimiṣa forest, who remembers (events of) seven Kalpas. Go and ask him. You may come to know then.

41. Thereafter, he immediately travelled by the aerial path, bowed down to that sage residing in Naimiṣāranya and asked him:

42. "O excellent sage, we hear that you are an ancient one of long life. Hence this question. Was a king named Indradyumna seen or heard by you?"

Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said:

43. In the course of these seven Kalpas, a king named Indradyumna has neither been seen nor heard about by me. So what can I say to you?

44. On hearing those words of his, the king lost all hopes. He became extremely disgusted and so he resolved to die.

45. Then he gathered some wood and kindled a fire. As he was about to step into the fire, king Indradyumna was thus addressed by sage Mārkaṇḍa:

46-47. "This you must not do. I have now become your friend. I shall dispel the (cause of your) death even if it be greatly difficult. You are not sick. You are hale and hearty. Why do you wish to die? Tell me the reason for taking away your life. I shall take a counter-measure."

Indradyumna said:

48. I was told by the residents of the city of Kāmpilya that you are a long-lived one. Hence, O great sage, I have come to you.

49. O excellent sage, (I expected) that you will tell me the tidings of Indradyumna. (I came to know) that my reputation was unknown to you. So I am causing my own death.

Sūta said:

50. On coming to know of his decision, the great sage was moved with pity. He fully knew that his endeavour was fruitless. Hence out of courteous consideration for him he spoke thus:

51-53. "If that be so, do not enter the fire. I will learn more about that king. There is a great friend of mine, a crane named Nāḍijaṅgha. He is an aged ancient one. He would certainly know about our king. Hence, do come; we shall go to him to Himālaya. Meeting with good persons can never go in vain anywhere."

54. After saying thus, the sage and the king joyously set off to Himālaya by the aerial path to meet the crane.

55. On seeing Mārkaṇḍeya approaching, the crane became highly pleased. He came facing them and honoured them with due welcome greetings:

56. "Blessed am I. I am indeed meritorious, since I have come in contact with you, O most excellent one among the knowers of Brahman. How best can I extend my hospitality to you?"

Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said:

57. You are longer-lived than I and you have become my friend. Has king Indradyumna been seen or heard about by you?

58. This friend of mine has something to do with someone seen by him. Otherwise it will end in his death. So I have come to you.

The Crane said:

59-60. I certainly remember fourteen Kalpas, but I do not

remember any legend connected with Indradyumna; let alone seeing him personally. It is the truth that has been uttered by me.

Indradyumna said:

61. Is this the power of penance, or of the observance of restraints or of making gifts that your life span has become so long despite the fact that you are only a crane? Do tell us.

Crane said:

62. My life has become so long due to the efficacy of Ghṛtakāmbala (covering the Liṅga with ghee) of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas. My being crane is the result of the curse of a sage.

63. Formerly, I was a boy in the household of a wise Brāhmaṇa named Pārāśarya (i.e. of Parāśara Gotra) in the beautiful city of Camatkārapura.

64. My name was Viśvarūpa and I was often remembered by the nick name "Baka" because I was very fickle-minded and a darling of my father.

65. Once, at the time of the transit of the Sun into Capricorn, I became excessively frivolous. I took the Liṅga which my father regularly adored, the Jāgeśvara Liṅga, and put it into the jar of ghee.

66. As the night passed away, I was questioned by my father. "Certainly, the Jāgeśvara Liṅga has been dropped down somewhere by you, dear boy. Do tell me. I shall give you something excellent to munch and crunch."

67. Urged by a desire to eat the (promised) luscious stuff, I immediately retrieved the Liṅga from the jar of ghee and placed it on the hand of my father even as it dripped with ghee.

68-69. After some time I died, but thanks to the power of dipping the Liṅga into ghee, I was reborn into the palace of the king of Ānarta equipped with the power of remembering the previous birth. I became well-known by the name Baka. Lord Hara was installed by me in the city of Camatkārapura.

70. Thanks to its power, O leading Brāhmaṇa, I reached the world of Pitāmaha later.

71-72. During the days of my rule, when the Sun remained in Capricorn, I used to cover with ghee all the excellent Liṅgas all over the earth. After establishing my son in the kingdom and employing servants everywhere with ample supply of cash and garments, I propitiated the excellent Liṅga installed by me in Camatkārapura, day and night.

73. After a long period of time, Lord Śiva was pleased with me. Approaching me he said these words:

74-75. "O excellent king, welfare unto you, I am pleased with you and your innumerable Ghṛtakāmbalādāna (covering the Liṅga with ghee). Hence, welfare unto you. Choose any boon whatever you have thought in your mind. I shall grant it to you, even if it is very rare and should not ordinarily be given."

76. Thereupon, Hara was told by me: "O Lord, if you are pleased with me, make me a Gaṇa of yours. I do not ask for anything else."

Śrī Bhagavān said:

77. O Baka, O highly esteemed one, come to the excellent mountain Kailāsa along with me in this very physical form. Be my Gaṇa.

78. Any other man in this mortal world who performs this rite at the time of the transit of the Sun, when the Sun is in Capricorn at the beginning of the night, will also be my Gaṇa, even if he only does the rite of Ghṛtakāmbala only once.

79. As for you, you have been worshipping my Liṅga for long. You will become well-known as Dharmasena devoid of defect.

80. After saying thus the Lord took me to the Kailāsa mountain and granted me the leadership of a corps of Gaṇas.

81. Once in the course of my wandering, I went to the most excellent mountain Himavān by chance.

82. It was there that the sage named Gālava resided permanently engaged in penance. His wife was a lady of wide eyes and endowed with all (excellent) characteristics.

83. She was red in seven parts of the body and profoundly deep and majestic in three. Her ankles remained hidden (under flesh) and she was lean-bellied. On seeing her, O great sage, I became overwhelmed by Manmatha (god of Love).

84-85. I reflected in my mind: 'How shall I kidnap her? Yes, I shall be his disciple and become devoted to him. Engaged in serving him, I shall get at the beautiful lady.'

86-88. I approached Sage Gālava in the form of a religious student thereafter (and said): "I am dejected and disgusted with the worldly existence. I will undertake great penance. Grant me initiation, O holy Lord, so that I can become your disciple. I shall bring Darbha grass, flowers, sacrificial twigs, fruits and water regularly."

89. Considering me to be a true Brāhmaṇa endowed with humility, he granted me the due initiation in accordance with the procedure laid down in the scriptural texts.

90. After obtaining the initiation, I began to propitiate him day by day. I served his wife too in accordance with her behests. But it was with an impure mind, because I was eagerly bent upon finding out a vulnerable point.

91. On another day, when she was in her monthly course, she went far from the hut at night. The noble-minded lady slept (in the open).

92. I assumed a very big form and abducted the poor lady who was sleeping soundly in a carefree manner and proceeded toward the south.

93. She woke up from her sleep at my touch. Realizing that I was the same disciple in the garb of a thief, she cried loudly.

94-95. She spoke to her husband, the excellent sage Gālava: "O holy lord, this ill-behaved disciple of yours is carrying me off. Save me from him. O highly esteemed one, lest he should go too far."

96. On hearing that Gālava said frequently "Stop! Stop! O wretch of wicked conduct! O defiled one! Your movement has been restrained by me."

97. At this utterance of his, there was a great obstacle to my movement. I stood motionless on the spot as though it was but a painted picture.

98. Then I was cursed by the noble-souled Gālava: "O evil-minded one, since I have been deceived by you, be a *Baka* (crane)."

99. Thereupon, I saw myself in the form of a *Baka* all of a sudden. But even in the state of a *Baka* I found that my

memory of previous life was not lost.

100. His wife who had been very miserable all over her body due to the contact with me had her ablution along with her clothes, now stood ready to curse me.

101. "I was asleep during my monthly period. You assumed another form and touched me in your attempt to kidnap. You deceived my husband by resorting to hypocrisy like a crane (Baka). Hence you shall indeed become a Baka."

102. Thus, cursed by both of them, I became grief-stricken. I fell at the feet of the noble-souled Gālava (and said):

103. "I am a Gaṇa of the noble-souled Three-eyed Lord of Devas well-known by the name Pālaka. I am employed as the Lord of a crore of Gaṇas.

104-108. I was here in connection with a job assigned by the Lord. Seeing your wife I became a victim of Kāma. In view of this, O great sage, forgive my outrageous conduct. On attaining good fortune, learning and prosperity, an ill-mannered fellow like me does not stay long in a single spot. I have become haughty and arrogant. I pretended to be a student of yours and approached you, O great sage, only with an intention to kidnap this noble, chaste lady. But be pleased with me even as I bow down to you in my wretchedness. Have favour on me by granting me your forgiveness. Forgiveness is a characteristic feature of saints. Melodious note is an attractive feature of cuckoos. Chastity is the (real) beauty of a woman. Learning is a relieving characteristic feature of the ugly ones and forgiveness is a characteristic feature of ascetics."

Sūta said:

109. On listening to those wretchedly desperate words of his (Baka), the sage, a devotee of Maheśvara, considered him as a kinsman, took pity on him and spoke these words:

110-111. "There is a Brāhmaṇa well-known by the name Bhartryajña in the splendid Camatkārapura. He is truthful in speech. By his instruction your Bakatva (state of being a crane) will vanish certainly at my instance. There is no doubt about it."

112-113. Then I found myself turned into a Baka. It was thus that I obtained a long life due to the devotion to Śiva

and the greatness of *Ghṛtakāmbala*. The state of a Baka was due to the curse of the sage.

Indradyumna said:

114-117. It is for this purpose that I have been brought to your presence, O bird, for the purpose of getting the news of Indradyumna. But due to my bad luck, O bird, you never had that news. I have already resolved to die. I shall therefore resort to a well-kindled fire. This has already been vowed by me earlier after making up my mind that if Indradyumna remains untraced, fire should be resorted to by me. Hence, along with Mārkaṇḍeya grant me permission so that, O Baka, I lost (i.e. forgotten by people) can enter fire with all reputation.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

118. Do you know any other man senior to you in age? In that case I shall go to him and ask him on behalf of this noble-souled one.

119. He has come here along with me because he has great faith in me. How can he abandon his life as long as I am alive as his assistant.

120. There is another relevant statement I have to make, O bird. Miserable that he is, he will enter fire. Without redeeming him, how can I go to my hermitage?

Sūta said:

121. On coming to know of their decision, the Baka became highly vexed. He pondered for a long time: on how the happiness of those two could be brought about.

122. The king and the sage gathered together some wood and were about to jump into the fire. On seeing them thus, the Baka spoke these words:

123-126. "O wise one, do as I say if you wish to live. He who will clearly know King Indradyumna has been now found out by me. He is my senior (in age). He is an adept in all the scriptural texts. Hence take this gentleman who, it seems, has decided to die, and who heaves sighs like a serpent. His

eyes are agitated and filled with tears. Come along with me to the mountain Kailāsa. It is there that my friend, the long-lived owl, lives. He will certainly know him. Do not end your life in vain."

127. Thereupon he, accompanied by the noble-souled Baka and Mārkaṇḍeya reached the excellent mountain Kailāsa.

128. He too (the owl) became delighted on seeing Baka, his intimate friend at hand. He delighted him with the words of welcome.

129. After he had taken rest (the owl) named Prākāraṇa embraced him repeatedly and spoke these words:

130-131. "Welcome, O king, O excellent Brāhmaṇa! Tell me, my friend, your business, the reason for your visit.

Who are these two persons who have come to me along with you? They have divine forms. They are esteemed ones enveloped with splendour."

The Baka said:

132. This is the well-known one named Mārkaṇḍa. He is famous in all the three worlds. He has attained great Siddhis as a favour of Maheśvara. The other one is one of his friends. I do not know him well. He came to me along with Mārkaṇḍa, my friend.

133. He expressed his desire to enquire about Indradyumna. But, friend, I do not know anything about him.

134. Thereupon, he became disgusted and desired fire for self-immolation. O bird, he has been brought here by me for the purpose of acquiring knowledge about him.

135. O highly intelligent one, if you know king Indradyumna, declare it so that he can turn away from (the thought of) death.

136. I know that you are one of very long life. Hence I have come to you.

The Owl said:

137. Twenty-eight Kalpas have gone by since my birth but no king named Indradyumna was seen or heard by me.

Indradyumna said:

138. Wherefore have you the state of owl? Tell me quickly. This is my curiosity. Why you have such a long life along with the terrible state of owl despised by the world?

The Owl said:

139. Listen. I shall tell you how I acquired a long life. It is by the grace of Maheśvara, a result of his adoration with Bilva leaves. I incurred the state of owl due to the curse of the noble-souled Bhṛgu.

140. Formerly, I was a Brāhmaṇa who had mastered all lores in the excellent city of Camatkārapura. I was well-known by the name Ghaṇṭaka. I was celibate having control over the sense-organs. I was engaged in the worship of Hara.

141. Śambhu was worshipped by me thrice a day with unbroken three-leaved Bilva-Patras growing on the top of the tree and numbering a hundred thousand.

142. At the end of a thousand years, Lord Hara was pleased with me. Appearing before me he spoke in deep-sounding voice as majestic as the roar of a cloud:

143-145a. "I am pleased with you, O dear one. Do choose your boon, O devotee of excellent Vratas. I am pleased because I have been worshipped by you thrice a day with unbroken Bilva leaves.

The pleasure that I derive through even a single sprout of Bilva cannot be obtained through even crores of other leaves, certainly, O friend, not even through sweet-smelling flowers."

145b. Welfare unto you, dear friend, the Moon-crested Lord was bowed to by me and addressed thus:

146. "O Lord, if you are pleased with me, if a boon has to be granted to me, then, O Lord of the universe, make me immune from death and old age."

147. The great Lord Maheśvara promised saying, "So it shall be" and vanished in a moment. The Lord of Devas went back to Kailāsa.

148. On having received the boon from Maheśvara, I was delighted and I considered myself blessed as one who has accomplished his object.

149. In the meantime (I met) the excellent sage Bhārgava

who was an expert in all scriptures and who had mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas.

150. His wife was a chaste lady well-known by the name Sudarśanā. She was the daughter of Sage Gālava and dearer to him than his own life.

151. His daughter was unrivalled all over the earth in beauty. She was once seen by me unexpectedly playing about as she pleased.

152. She was slender in the middle. Her tresses of hairs were excellent. Her eyes were long and her lips resembled a Bimba fruit. On seeing her I fell victim to Lord Kāma.

153. Then I asked: "Whose daughter is this girl of beautiful eyes? She shines like a celestial damsel with limbs symmetrical and well-proportioned."

154. Her friend informed me that she was the daughter of Sage Bhārgava. "Even now this girl of sweet smiles is a virgin."

155. Then I went to Bhārgava and stood near him humbly with palms joined in reverence. I requested him for the hand of the girl.

156. O highly-esteemed one, though I was not handsome (though I was deformed) the scion of the family of Bhṛgu, gave her to me after coming to know that I was of the same caste.

157. The girl came to know that she was lawfully given away to me, an ugly one. She went to her mother and spoke these words:

158-159a. She was very shy but was excessively distressed. She said: "See mother. I am given away to an ugly fellow. I do not wish to live thus. I will either swallow poison or jump into fire."

159b. On hearing her words, the Brāhmaṇa was prohibited by her (from giving the daughter):

160. "O Lord, why was this girl given away to an ugly fellow by you? She is endowed with a beautiful form and all excellent features!"

161-162. On hearing these words, the excellent Sage Bhārgava rebuked her and said: "Fie upon this woman who behaves like a man! The girl was requested for by this (Baṭu) and she is given away by me to him. Why do you stop me from giving her away, this daughter of mine?"

163. After saying this, he went to sleep along with his wife and daughter.

164. At midnight I went there and carried off the daughter of Bhārgava even as she was asleep and brought her to my abode at night, while all the people were lying asleep.

165. She was engaged by me in amorous activities forcefully though she did not relish it. The Brāhmaṇa, her father, got up in the morning (and saw thus).

166. "Where is my daughter? By whom has she been abducted? My daughter has been ruined!" Saying thus he came out and roamed about in the forest nearby.

167. Surrounded by many sages (he came to my abode) tracing the path through the footprints. His daughter was seen by him in bridal form.

168. Bashfully looking down, she was loudly crying. Then Bhārgava spoke to me in great anger:

169. "Since you married my daughter in the manner of night-stalkers (demons), you shall certainly be a *Nisācara* (night-stalker, demon) as a result of this conduct."

Ghaṇṭaka said:

170. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, why do you curse me rashly, though I am not at fault? This girl has been given away to me by you yourself. Therefore, she was carried off by me in the night.

171. An evil-minded one who, after once giving away his daughter does not later hand her over, falls into hell and remains there till the ultimate annihilation of all living beings.

172. Then he thought thus: 'This fellow has uttered the truth.' Regretting everything, he spoke these words:

173-174. "The truth has been expressed by you, But unfortunately my words cannot be altered. You will become one, in the form of an owl. There is no doubt about it. When the great sage Bhartr̥yajña is born here you will hear his instruction and get back your own body."

175. Thereafter, I saw myself in the form of an owl. Yet, the power of memory was not marred. It remained the same as before.

176. His daughter whom I had married by force on that mountain saw me in the altered form. She became distressed.

As she did not like the state of widowhood she jumped into fire.

177. It was in this manner, O highly refulgent one that, the state of owl was forced on me by the curse of Bhārgava on account of his daughter. It has been narrated to you.

178. Since Maheśvara was adored by means of unbroken Bilva-leaves, I acquired longevity. It is the truth that has been now told to you by me.

179. Tell me then the fact. You have come to my abode as a guest what purpose of yours can I carry out? O highly esteemed one, even if it be too difficult to accomplish (tell me).

Indradyumna said:

180. I have come to you for information regarding Indradyumna. When I had resolved to die, I was brought here by Nāḍijaṅgha.

181. If you also do not know him by his lineage and reputation, I shall certainly enter a well-kindled fire.

182. If not, tell me (the address of) some other long-lived personage, so that I shall go to him and ask him whether he knows or not.

Baka said:

183. What is proper has been said by this gentleman. Do so and tell him if you know anyone more long-lived than yourself.

184. Otherwise, I too will soon jump into fire along with Mārkaṇḍa now, even as you remain watching.

185. In view of all these, O highly esteemed one, think about some long-lived personage present elsewhere in the world. You are sure to know, because you have been living pretty long.

186. I have come to your abode with the greatest of hopes. So also this gentleman Mārkaṇḍeya who is a dear friend of mine.

187. Here there are hundreds and thousands of excellent mountains. There may live highly esteemed sages of very long life. Otherwise the life of this gentleman cannot be sustained by any means.

188. It will do immense good to the saintly King Indradyumna. So also to us both. Hence think about it soon.

189. Knowing that the king had resolved to die, the owl took pity on them and spoke these words:

190-191. "O highly esteemed one, if you are bent upon committing suicide now, come with me to Mountain Gandhamādāna.

There is a Grdhra (vulture) there. He is a great friend of mine. He is pretty ancient. He will know your king. At my instance he will undoubtedly say everything clearly."

192-193. On hearing his words, he (the king) was addressed by the three beginning with Mārkaṇḍeya: "O highly esteemed one, do not jump into fire. All of us shall go along with you there. Perhaps he knows King Indradyumna."

194. On hearing their words the king regained great hopes. He went to Gandhamādāna along with all of them.

195. On seeing them all, the king of vultures came joyously before the owl with palms joined in reverence.

196. Then he said with great pleasure: "Welcome to you, O most excellent one among birds. You are now seen after a long time. Who are these others?"

The Owl said:

196. This is my great friend Nāḍijaṅgha, the oft-remembered Baka. This here is Mārkaṇḍa, his great friend.

198. He is well-known all over the three worlds as a person remembering the events of seven Kalpas. This here is one of his friends. I do not know fully about him.

199. He was brought to you by me when he was about to die. He will continue to live if more is known about King Indradyumna. If not, he will immediately jump into a well-kindled fire.

200. If you know about king Indradyumna, say so (as) you are longer-lived than I. Hence you are being approached for further information.

The Grdhra said:

201. I do not remember any king well-known as Indradyumna. This king Indradyumna has neither been seen nor heard about.

202. On hearing those words of his that king became disheartened and mentally brooded over his decision to die.

203-204. (In the meantime) urged by curiosity, he asked the excellent bird: "Tell me, how this longevity has been acquired. What was the holy rite whereby it has been obtained? After hearing this from you, I may have to seek refuge in holy fire."

The Ṛḍhira said:

205. I was a monkey in the city of Camatkārapura at the foot of Mountain Raktaśṛṅga.

206. There itself there is a great temple of Śāmbhu. It can be compared to Mountain Mandara. The deity is called Citreśvara and is the destroyer of all sins.

207. At the advent of spring season, citizens of rural districts all round came there and celebrated a grand festival.

208. Near the Liṅga there was a beautiful forest with trees bearing fruits in all the seasons. The women-folk liked it all the more and it charmed the general public. In a swing suspended from a tree the beautiful Liṅga was installed.

209. They concluded the adoration with Damanaka flowers and placed the Liṅga in the swing tied firmly, after which they went home.

210. At the beginning of night, I began to sway to and fro the charming swing as I was prompted by a great zeal.

211. Even as I was engaged in swaying it thus, men came there. A few of them hit me with sticks and terrorised me from all sides.

212. I met with death immediately in the very shrine. Then I was reborn in the palace of a king retaining the faculty of remembering the incidents of previous births.

213. The king was a Koṭīśvara (Lord of Crores). I became well-known by the name Kuśadhvaṇa. Then in due course, the ancestral kingdom was inherited by me.

214. Koṭīśvara passed on to the other world as a result of his Karma. I began to sway the swing the highly esteemed Jāgeśvara deity, as I pleased.

215-216. I uttered the Mantras contained in the scriptural texts of Śivasiddhānta as taught by my preceptor. After a long time, Lord Hara was pleased with me. He spoke these

words: "I am willing to grant you a boon. O Kuśadhvaja, I am pleased with your great devotion. Welfare unto you. Choose your boon whatever had been cherished in the mind."

217. Thereupon, I bowed down to Lord Hara and spoke this loudly:

218. "O Lord, if you are pleased with me then you make me your Gaṇa. Now nothing else, not even the kingdom of the three worlds, appeals to me."

219. On being told thus by me, the Lord placed me in an aerial chariot and soon brought me to the highly meritorious Śivaloka.

220. Ever since then, with the favour of Bhavāni and Hara, I was established amongst the Gaṇas and I continued to sport about there.

221. Once, I was seated in an excellent aerial chariot and roamed about as I pleased. Thus I came to this great mountain.

222. It was at the advent of Spring time. The southern wind had begun to blow. Once the daughter of Agniveśya was seen (bathing) naked in the middle of a pond.

223. She was so slender in the middle (waist) that she could be held with one's fist. With lips like a Bimba fruit and eyes resembling a lotus she was sporting about as she pleased in the company of many female companions.

224. Her breasts were round like a Bilva fruit and her countenance had the lustre of the moon. She had all the characteristic features (of a beautiful lady). (No wonder) I became overwhelmed by Manmatha in an instant.

225. I got down from the excellent aerial chariot and caught hold of her hand. She began to cry piteously like a female osprey.

226. The daughters of the leading sages who were there in the water rushed to the side of Agniveśya weeping and crying bitterly.

227. "O holy Sir, your daughter is being carried away in an excellent aerial chariot by a certain aviator. She is lamenting incessantly."

228. On hearing those words, he became furious. Looking upwards at the path of the sky, he came out of his hermitage and began to rebuke repeatedly.

229. Saying 'Stop! Stop! he paralyzed everything around.

By the fierce power of the penance of the Brāhmaṇa, my aircraft came to a standstill and stood motionless.

230-231. In his great anger he spoke to me thus: "My daughter who was playing has been abducted by you, O sinner, despite her not liking it at all. Like a vulture carrying off a lump of meat, O wretch of crooked mind, you are carrying her away. So be a vulture yourself at my instance undoubtedly."

232. On being spoken thus by him I was overcome by shame. I returned the girl to him and bowed to him repeatedly.

233-234. Then the Brāhmaṇa Agniveśya of intense austerity was addressed by me: "It was not known to me that she was your daughter. It does not behove you to get furious. O great sage, do see to it that the state of being vulture is revoked."

235-237. Then he told me: "My utterance cannot be futile and false. Somehow, it will take place. So the vulturehood shall prevail.

O base one, at the instance of Ānarta you will approach the highly esteemed Bharṭṛyajña for the purpose of receiving instructions. You will then get acquittance from him and regain your original form, when the vulturehood passes off." Since then I have been in search of him. He was not seen or heard of. I am fed up with this vulturehood. I don't see the end of the curse.

Gr̥dhra said:

238. Now here I have told you everything regarding my vulturehood with the cause thereof along with that of longevity without limitation.

Indradyumna said:

239. Grant me the permission soon. Let me jump into the fire for I do not wish to live further. I have become so disgusted.

240. On being told thus by him, he began to think within himself: 'He has approached me along with a friend. So I shall render help in accordance with my ability, even if the task becomes very difficult.'

241-243. Thus, urged by love and excess of courteous consideration, he spoke thus: "Oh, just listen to my words. Do not seek refuge in fire. I shall speak to you of a person more aged than I. He will undoubtedly know this king Indradyumna. So come along with me to the presence of that noble-souled one accompanied by all of your associates and of course along with

Indradyumna said:

244. O excellent bird, who is that senior in age to you? This is my curiosity. O highly intelligent one, do tell me.

The Ṛdhra said:

245. This is a tortoise of very long life in the Mānasa lake well-known by the name Mantharaka. He will know (i.e. must be knowing) Indradyumna.

246. On hearing his words the three beginning with Mārkaṇḍa said to that excellent king who had decided to die:

247-248. "What is proper has been said by the intelligent king of vultures, O highly esteemed one. Let all of us go to that place where this tortoise is living.

Scholars well conversant with the science of ethics and politics praise absence of despondency as the cause of glory. So let us go; come on."

Sūta said:

249. On hearing their words the king who had developed supreme detachment desisted resorting to death.

250. Then all those five started from the Gandhamādana mountain and proceeded towards the excellent Mānasa lake. They reached there in due course travelling through the sky.

251. The Mānasa lake appeared very beautiful. The tortoise had come out of the water and was basking in the sun casually.

252. He looked at four of them closely for a long time and recognised them. Then he suddenly disappeared into the water.

253-254. Thereupon, the owl told him as he turned away his face: "O friend, even after seeing me you have averted your

face. In fact, even the basest one who comes to one's abode should be honoured much by good people."

255. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, then the tortoise came partially out of the water showing the head alone and, humbly replied to the vulture:

256-258. "I am not turning away my face on seeing you or these two others. This great man who has arrived here as the fifth among you (has terrified me).

I disappeared on becoming afraid of him, the king Indradyumna. Formerly my back was burnt by him through the sacrificial fire in which he had been regularly performing sacrifice in the excellent city Rocaka.

On remembering the events pertaining to him, I became very much afraid. Indeed the reputation of the saintly king Indradyumna is great."

259. As soon as these words were uttered by the tortoise, a divine messenger came there from heaven at bidding of Parameṣṭhin.

The divine messenger said:

260-261. O saintly king, come, do come now to the presence of Brahmā. O king, I have been told by Brahmā: "When even a bit of it (Indradyumna's renown) becomes manifest on the surface of the world, the king should be brought immediately to my world that is very difficult to attain."

262. Hence, do come, we shall go. Get into this aerial chariot so that I can take you to the presence of Brahmā of unknown birth.

Indradyumna said:

263-264. If these friends of mine, the Baka, the owl and the tortoise along with Mārkaṇḍeya also come along with me and also the vulture. I shall come with you to the presence of Brahmā. Otherwise I will not come. The truth has been uttered by me.

The Devadūta said:

265. All these are Gaṇas of Hara. They have come down

to earth due to curses. At the end of the curse, they will once again go to the presence of Hara undoubtedly.

266. Hence do come, we shall go quickly, O king leaving them here. Heaven does not appeal to them. Nothing appeals to them except Lord Maheśvara.

Indradyumna said:

267-268a. If it is so, do go. Welfare unto you. I will not go to heaven. I shall also try to become a Gaṇa. One dwelling there (in heaven) is under a perpetual threat of downfall.

268-269a. On being told thus by him, the divine messenger became embarrassed very much. He took the aircraft back to Brahmāloka.

269b-270. With great humility Indradyumna asked the tortoise:

“O tortoise, tell me how you have become long-lived like this. By what Karma was tortoisehood attained by you. Tell me quickly.”

The tortoise said:

271. Formerly, in the beautiful city of Camatkārapura I was a Brāhmaṇa known by the name Śaṇḍilya. I was a boy then.

272. During my childish sports, even as a part of play a shrine was built of baked bricks and a Jāgeśvara Liṅga was brought from somewhere and placed inside.

273. With great devotion, I began to worship it everyday. I was surrounded by many children and I played and worshipped it uttering Mantras.

274. After some time, I met with my death. I was reborn as a Brāhmaṇa in the city of Vaidiśa (Vidiśā) endowed with the faculty of remembering earlier births.

275-276. Then my devotion to Lord Hara became more intense. Everyday I went on begging and requesting for food and cash. Then I built a palace (shrine) and installed Liṅga.

Then I began to adore devoutly Lord Paśupati Hara.

277. My diet consisted of only the food I received as alms. I practised celibacy and studied the Vedas. I performed the Japa of Śiva thrice a day.

278. As a result of the power thereof, I was reborn as a

great king, an Emperor endowed with the power of remembering earlier births.

279. Then, O great king, innumerable palaces of the Three-eyed Lord were built by me. They could be compared to peaks of Kailāsa.

280. Adoration with many flowers was also performed by me. Nothing else like charity etc. was practised by me.

281. After a long time the Moon-crested Lord became pleased with me. Then, O saintly king, he laughed and said to me in gentlest of words:

282. "O Jayadatta, O excellent one among kings, I am very much pleased with this devotion of yours. Tell me quickly what desire of yours shall I grant."

283. I bowed down, I prostrated with the eight limbs touching the ground and I eulogized in different ways. Then, O king, Hara was requested thus: "Make me immune from death and old age." He promised saying, "So it shall be" and vanished.

284. The Lord whose movements could not be comprehended, the Lord of the fourteen worlds (thus blessed me). Free from death and old age I was fully contented. With no enemies all over the earth, I roamed about as I pleased.

285. Then after lapse of a long period, I became tormented with the intense fire of love and became devoid of devotion to Śiva.

286. Whenever I saw any charmingly beautiful woman even if she was another man's wife, I watched her for a long time and ultimately ravished (her).

287. I had abandoned all fear of Dharmarāja (god of Death), I depended on my being a king.

288. In the meantime, O king, a great hue and cry arose all over the earth on account of my sinful acts.

289. Meanwhile, Dharmarāja rushed to Śiva's presence, bowed down in great grief and loudly appealed:

290-293. "O Deva, being extremely pleased, a king on the earth named Jayadatta was rendered free from death and old age by you.

That man of crooked intellect outrages the modesty of chaste women. All the people have excluded holy rites (from their daily routine) because they are afraid of the king.

O most excellent one among Devas, this is not because they (people) are naturally so. He is not afraid of me at all. It is the truth that I utter.

Hence restrain him quickly lest piety (Dharma) should come to an end in the mortal world completely due to the rape of chaste women."

294. On being told thus, the Lord became extremely furious. He got me brought before him even as I trembled and kept my palms joined together in reverence and cursed me:

295. "O foolish one of evil conduct, you have done something despicable. Hence be completely damned (lit. burnt) by my curse. You will become a tortoise."

296. Thereupon, I prayed to Paramēśvara in utter wretchedness: "O Lord, take pity on me. Give an end to this curse."

297. Thereupon, this was uttered by him again: "At the end of sixty Kalpas, you will regain your original body and then become my Gaṇa."

298. Meanwhile, O king, I became turned into a tortoise. Falling into the waters of the ocean I became permanently miserable.

299. Once upon a time, O king, you were reigning on the earth and water from the ocean was fetched by you for the performance of Yajña.

300. (I was also brought along with the water.) I was fixed on the ground and kept steady with the utterance of Mantras. Hundreds and thousands of Yajñas were performed on me (my back).

301. As the Yajñas were being performed, my back was burnt all round, O great king, but though I was scorched it did not cause my death, thanks to the favour of Maheśa.

302. Scorching alone continued, due to the sin incurred before. I experienced it all undoubtedly due to Hara's anger.

303. After you had gone to heaven, O excellent king, the whole of the earth was flooded with water and was turned into one vast expanse of the ocean. Then I reached the Mānasa lake floating over it.

304. Already fifty-six Kalpas have gone before me. With another four more I will get relieved from this tortoisehood.

305. Thus everything has been narrated to you including

the cause of my longevity viz. that Hara was propitiated through plentiful floral adorations.

306-308. It was through the anger of Kāmadeva that I had to undergo the state of tortoisehood.

Now, O esteemed one, tell me what service can I render to you, my guest, one who has come to my abode though you were a sort of enemy before? What is it that is cherished in your heart?

For a long time my back was burnt by you through the sacrificial fire. Even now I see it blazing as it were. That was why, O king, I disappeared on seeing you.

Pray (tell me), why did you not go to heaven although the aerial chariot had been brought. Indeed kings perform holy rites only for the sake of this (attainment of heaven).

Indradyumna said:

309. Even in the case of getting a place in heaven there is this perpetual fear of downfall in the minds of all the people. Hence I will not go there. I will endeavour for liberation (from Samsāra).

310. If you wish to do your duty, O friend, towards me who have come to your abode, tell me if there is anyone more aged than you and if you are in friendly terms with him

Tortoise said:

311. There is a Brāhmaṇa-sage named Lomaśa. He is senior to me in age. It is heard and also he has been seen by me resorting to a river bank.

Indradyumna said:

312. So come all of you. We shall go quickly and ask him the cause of his long life.

313. Then all those five took to the aerial path. They then saw Lomaśa who had no shade over his head.

314. He was a sage of self-control engaged in studying the Vedas and devoted to the performance of Japa and Homa. In his left hand he was holding a bundle of straw to serve as a cover (over the head).

315. There was a rosary of beads held in his right hand. On seeing the noble soul, they circumambulated him. They were greeted with a word of welcome and all of them sat down.

316. They were then asked by him: "Who may you be? Why have you come here? Let everything be mentioned to me in full confidence so that I can do everything you want."

Tortoise said:

317-318. This is the Brāhmaṇa-sage named Mārkaṇḍa. He is capable of remembering the events of seven Kalpas. O excellent sage, he was brought by this king Indradyumna to the presence of this Baka, the wire one named Nāḍijaṅgha. It was for the purpose of getting information about Indradyumna (of bygone years) after coming to know that the Baka enjoyed twice the longevity (of Mārkaṇḍa).

319. When the king was not recognized by him both of them came to the presence of this Ulūka (owl).

320. Twice the number of Kalpas had elapsed in the case of this noble-souled one but, O excellent sage, the king was not recognized by him.

321. Then all the three were brought to the proximity of the king of vultures.

322. Fifty-six Kalpas had elapsed in the case of this noble soul, but, O excellent sage, the king was not recognized by him.

323. All the four were then brought to me by this (king) after knowing me to be long-lived and encouraged by my friendship.

324-327a. Even as he came, from a long way off he was recognized by me. 'Certainly, this is Indradyumna by whom my back was singed through the sacrificial fire after making my steady stay beneath the ground through Mantras.' Then I vanished because of fear of him but was prevented by the vulture and others who indulged in taunting.

He was told by me out of love when he entered the water: "I am not averting my face from you, but from Indradyumna by whom my back was singed through the sacrificial fire."

327b. In the meantime, a divine messenger of lofty mind came there seated in an excellent aerial chariot from heaven for the sake of this noble soul.

328. This king was dropped from heaven due to loss of renown. But as soon as (the words of recognition) were uttered by me, the aerial chariot also arrived from heaven.

329. Then this (king) did not go to heaven, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, because he did not want to go without the three of us belonging to lower species excluding Mārkaṇḍeya.

330. When he asked it was told by me that my age extended to ninety-six Kalpas. So many Kalpas passed off even as I lived.

331. On being asked by him earlier, I had told him that you were the more aged one, stationed here and also that I too had been here.

332. It is on account of this that all of us have come to your presence. Hence kindly explain whatever this king asks.

Bhartriyāṇa said:

333. Lomaśa said to him: "O king, ask without reserve. I shall certainly recount clarifying what you ask."

Indradyumna said:

334. Even in the summer season, when the sun is in the middle of the sky (you do not have a shelter). How is it that you have not built a good abode for your stay?

Lomaśa said:

335. For whose sake is a house to be built? Life is not eternal. If the body was permanent, perhaps it would have been built.

Indradyumna said:

336. It is heard that you are the most long-lived one in all the world. Therefore, I too have come to you with a desire to meet you.

Lomaśa said:

337. As one Kalpa succeeds another Kalpa one hair of mine gets lost. When all the hairs disappear I, too will die.

338. You do see. It is very clear. My body is devoid of hair.

O highly intelligent one, for that reason I am not building a house.

Indradyumna said:

339. What Karma was done by you, whereby such a (long) life has been acquired? Is it due to the power of Dāna, of penance or of observance of restraints?

Lomaśa said:

340. Formerly, I was a Śūdra overwhelmed by poverty. For the sake of the belly I always used to roam about all over the earth.

341. On account of great Karmayoga I came to the holy spot Hātakeśvara. I was distressed due to hunger and thirst. I came to the spot where I found this excellent Liṅga. The Liṅga was shaken by me (but it did not move). I saw that it was a self-born Liṅga.

342. I took cool and pure water and bathed the Liṅga. Then adoration was performed by me with these lotuses.

343. I concluded the worship and by the time I resumed the journey, I fell down dead. (No wonder) my throat had already been parched with thirst and hunger.

344. Then I was reborn in the house of a Brāhmaṇa possessing the ability of remembering earlier births. O king, I remembered everything as a result of the adoration of the Lord of Devas.

345-346. My delighted father gave me the name Īśāna because I had been a gift of the earlier adoration of Īśāna. I was dumb ever since the birth. I did not utter any word. Further, being aware of the true nature of the worldly existence, I was utterly disgusted and detached.

347. On account of his excess of fondness for me, my father tried all sorts of medicines for the recovery of the faculty of speech. He resorted to the Japa of Mantras. He prayed to deities for the fulfilment of his desire. Day and night he untiringly consulted Brāhmaṇas.

348. O king, I used to laugh to myself on seeing the over-attachment to worldly comforts on the part of my father and mother.

349. Gradually, I attained the prime of youth. On a certain night, I left off both of them and came to this place.

350. Ever since then I have been worshipping Īśāna with great concentration and ardent devotion with a delighted heart and bath the Liṅga with cool water.

351. With the waters of the holy river Brāhmaṇī¹, O excellent king, I performed the ablution thrice a day. I adopted the practice of gleanings of ears of corn and sustained my life with Nivāra rice, Badara seeds, green vegetables, cucumber pieces, fruits and leaves.

352. Thereafter, Lord Rudra, Hara, the Lord of all Devas, appeared before me and spoke in words as majestic as rumbling of a cloud:

353. "O dear one, I am pleased with you. O Brāhmaṇa of excellent holy rites, choose a boon I shall grant you even those things that cannot be ordinarily granted, even if they are very rare."

354. Then I bowed down to him and eulogized him with various kinds of eulogies. Then I said to him: "O Lord, make me free from old age and death."

Śrī Bhagavān said:

355. Since there is nothing like immortality here in the mortal world, set a limit to your span of life.

356-357. Then the Lord was told by me: "O Lord of Devas, let one hair of mine drop away at the end of a Kalpa. When all the hairs of mine drop away let me attain the state of your Gaṇa, O Lord."

358-362. (The Lord said:) "It shall be so but my Liṅga should be bathed always with the water of this Brāhmaṇī river.

O excellent Brāhmaṇa, this Liṅga is worthy of being adored by Brahmā and others thrice a day. You will have the span of life equal to a single day of mine.

Any other man who adores me devoutly and bathes the Liṅga shall become free from sins.

He will never meet with accidental or unnatural death, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, even if my person adored by Brahmā and others is adored only once.

1. Probably the river Bahamani in Orissa—De, p. 40.

He who drinks even once the water of Brahma Tirtha, shall instantly become a purified soul bereft of all sins."

363. After saying thus the Lord of Devas vanished.

364. O king, ever since then I have been staying here worshipping this Liṅga always with excellent devotion.

365. On account of this, by the grace of Śaṅkara, the span of my life has become very long. There is no other cause.

Indradyumna said:

366. I too shall worship this Liṅga along with you. I will not go elsewhere. This is the resolve in my heart.

Lomaśa said:

367. O highly esteemed one, do this. You will achieve your desire. What is desired (by a devotee) is not difficult to get for the people devoted to Hara.

368. Let Nāḍijaṅgha go home. So also Mārkaṇḍa, the vulture and the owl. Only you, accompanied by the tortoise stay in my hermitage.

369. Then all of them said: "O king, we will not go back without you to our abodes again. We will worship and propitiate this Liṅga that is being adored by you."

370. After saying thus all of them stayed in the excellent hermitage of Lomaśa and worshipped that Liṅga thrice a day.

371. They bathed the Liṅga with the waters of Brāhmaṇī river and worshipped with lotuses and other flowers.

372. Once upon a time, in the course of his pilgrimage, Nārada, the excellent sage, came to the place where they were (staying).

373. On seeing Nārada, they performed duly all the rites of honouring him. Coming to know that he had had his rest, they asked him with all humility:

374-376. (*Corrupt text*) "We four beginning with the Baka and ending with the Kūrma (tortoise) (can be free from our curses), O great sage, only on the sight of Saṁhvata.

It is not known at what place he resides, what his form is, what his status is, what he does and where his permanent resort is.

O highly esteemed one, if you know where he stays permanently, kindly let us know. Nothing is beyond the ken of your perception.

Śrī Nārada said:

377. I know that Samvarta¹ perfectly. The excellent sage remains in seclusion. His conduct is well-concealed. No one else knows him at all.

378. That *Avadhūta* (nude ascetic or ascetic without worldly attachment), the great sage, resides in Vārāṇasī permanently. He is naked. He smears himself with filth and rubbish. He always resorts to forest.

379. At the *Kutapa* hour (eighth Muhūrta) he comes to that city. He receives alms from only a few houses. He receives everything on the palm of the hand (that works as a pot) once and eats it.

380-381. In the evening he goes back to some forest region.

In that city there are hundreds and thousands of ascetics with the same (routine) features. Many of them are excellent ascetics. They stay in the city. But I shall describe to you the characteristics of (that Samvarta) so that you can recognize him without doubts.

382. A corpse should be secretly and cautiously placed in the main street of Vārāṇasī so that no one shall know it.

383. All the ascetics shall mostly cross over it, but Samvarta endowed with divine vision will not transgress this obstacle.

384. He who retreats from the ground where the corpse is concealed, should be known as Samvarta. Thereafter, he should be asked.

385. If he asks, "By whom have I been described to you," you must say "By Nārada who has always known you."

386-387. If he asks again, "Where is Nārada staying," then he should be told, "After describing you, he has entered fire."

388. On hearing the words of Nārada, all those beginning with Lomaśa came to the city of Vārāṇasī with a desire to see him.

1. One of the sons of Aṅgiras, he was Bṛhaspati's brother—Mbh, Ādi. 66 5.

389. They hid a corpse in the main street without being seen by the people. They themselves stood far away watching carefully.

390. Then at the *Kutapa* hour (eighth Muhūrta of the day) Samvarta came with the same form and features as described by the noble-souled Nārada.

391. With his divine vision, the great sage saw the corpse. He retreated though he was distressed with hunger and thirst. He did not cross over the Śālya (obstacle, corpse)

392. They closely followed him saying, "Stop! Stop! Be pleased to do us a favour."

393. He rebuked these saying, "Go back. Do not come near me." Then he fled.

394. After going far away he said because he was hungry:

395. "By whom have I been revealed to you? Let him be exposed so that I shall reduce him to ash in the fire of curse."

They said:

396. That you are stationed here has been divulged to us by Nārada. After doing this, he instantly entered fire.

Samvarta said:

397. I will do the same to that wicked one now, by whom I have been revealed to you though I was remaining hidden in my activity.

They said:

398. O holy Sir, O great sage, you have been revealed to us by Nārada. We have been searching for you for a long time, and no one else knows you.

399. After revealing to us, he has entered the sacred fire instantly. O leading Brāhmaṇa, we do not know the reason thereof.

Samvarta said:

400-401. I am excessively angry. By means of curse I was about to do the same thing as he has himself done. So tell me quickly why you all have come.

402. I will not stay here long. I will be roaming about in the direction of the city because I have to beg for alms for sustaining my life.

403. Let the road be rid of this obstacle. Let this corpse be taken away. If you do not do so I will curse you.

404. Further, I should not be revealed to anyone as staying here. King Marutta has always been in search of me.

405. It is for the sake of a Yajña. I will not at all perform the Yajña on his behalf.¹ That king has been abandoned by Dhiṣaṇa (Jupiter), the preceptor.

406. Knowing that I am the son of Guru he is in search of me.

They said:

407. We four beginning with the Baka have fallen down due to curses. O excellent sage, we attained the state of birds due to the curse of Brahmā (or Brāhmaṇas).

408. We were Maheśvara Gaṇas held in respect in all the three worlds. We have been brought down to the level of lowly creatures. We are hence disgusted and dejected very much.

409. End to the curses originating from women had been indicated by those Brāhmaṇas namely through your instructions. So the Baka and others have sought refuge in you.

410. O highly esteemed holy Sir, save us now from the state of birds.

411. We have become despondent and disgusted after enduring this state of being birds for a long time. This is the reason for coming into contact with you.

Samvarta said:

412. If it is so, do go to the city of Camatkārapura. Bhartṛyajña too is there. He is one who removes all doubts.

413. He will give everyone excellent instruction. Thereby all of you will get clarification of your earlier doubts.

414. Formerly, he was Yājñavalkya, the master of all the

1. But ultimately he did perform Marutta's sacrifice—Mbh, Droṇa 55-38 Śānti 29.20-21

scriptural topics. In another birth, he was remembered as Kātyāyana.¹

415. In the next rebirth he became well-known as Brāhmaṇa Vararuci. Again in the next rebirth he became the son of a harlot.

416. The goddess, the daughter of Brahmā, was propitiated always in the form of Speech. But the goddess did not become satisfied because she had some reason therefor.

417. Born of a Brāhmaṇa he met with his death. Then Sarasvatī occupied the mouth (tongue) herself.

418. If she is propitiated earlier, she never abandons him at any cost. In the course of the Yajña of the son of the harlot, there happened a miracle.

419. The Brahmasūtra comes to the shoulder, coming out and goes away.

420. He dispelled the doubts regarding the Yajña rites, of even the earlier people. None else could do so.

Sūta said:

421. On hearing his words, they bowed down to him repeatedly. On being directed by Saṁvarta, they went to the place where the corpse had been kept.

422-426. They removed the corpse and all went to Camatkārapura. In the Tirtha called *Vāstusthānapada* they saw him (Bhartṛyajña) stationed. They bowed down to him and said with humility: "We four have been completely scorched by the curse of Brāhmaṇas. Three of us attained the state of birds and the last one that of tortoise. Those who are standing nearby are even greater ones. This is Markaṇḍa and the other is known as Indradyumna. The third one is a sage of well-known great austerity named Lomaśa. Now all these are disgusted with their lives. It behoves you to bless them by giving them proper instruction."

1. Historically Yājñvalkya, Kātyāyana, Vararuci are different persons. The first is a philosopher famous in the *Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and the author of a Smṛti. The latter two are grammarians. The Purāṇa author mixes them together as the incarnations of Yājñvalkya.

Sūta said:

427. On hearing their words, Bhartr̥yājña, the great sage, meditated for a long time. Having understood everything through the divine vision he said

428-430. "O ye who have come here, install seven Lingas in the Hāṭakeśvara shrine very near to the deity, after your own names. Then, in front of them, make seven Dānas named after the *Kula Parvatas*. They shall be destructive of all the sins.

Then you will have the divine and charming body of Gaṇas of the noble-souled Three-eyed Lord of Devas."

They said:

431. O Lord, O great sage, describe to us the relevant Dāna, so that we can start giving it away. Let us know the magnitude and procedure in detail.

Bhartr̥yājña said:

432-433. (The Dāna named after) *Meru* should be made in gold, *Kailāsa* in silver, *Himādri* in cotton, *Gandhmādana* in jaggery. *Suvēla* should be given in the form of gingelly seeds, *Vindhya* in that of sugar and *Śrngī* in that of salt. All these gifts should be made in accordance with the injunctions.

Sūta said:

434. On hearing his words, the seven Lingas were duly installed by them. (The Dānas named after) *Kulaparvatas* were given thereafter.

435. Before the deity Indradyumneśvara, the valorous Indradyumna who abided by the instruction of Bhartr̥yājña, prepared (a replica of) *Meru* in gold (and gifted it).

436. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, a silver replica of *Kailāsa* was given devoutly by the wise Mārkaṇḍa in front of Mārkaṇḍeśvara.

437-441. *Himavān* made of cotton was gifted away to a Brāhmaṇa by *Pālaka*. *Gandhamādana* mountain made of jaggery was gifted by *Ghaṇṭaka*, O excellent Brāhmaṇas in front of Lord *Ghaṇṭakeśvara*. The excellent mountain *Suvēla* made of gingelly seeds was given by the tortoise in front of Lord

Kacchapeśvara. Mountain Vindhya was devoutly given by the person named Īśāna before his deity. It was made of sugar. The great mountain named Śṛṅgī made of salt was gifted by the Ḡṛdhra in front of the deity Vānareśvara Deva. All of them made the gifts with their minds purified by faith.

442. There a miracle happened, O Brāhmaṇas, as soon as the excellent mountains were gifted away. The state of their being birds in the case of three vanished along with the state of being a tortoise in the case of the other.

443. In the meantime, by the power thereof, all of them became persons wearing divine garlands and garments and smeared with divine scents and unguents. All those who stood in front of them also were so.

444. In an instant, aerial chariots also came for the sake of all of them. They approached Bharṭṛyajña and bowed to all the Brāhmaṇas. Then they rode on the excellent aerial chariots and reached the Kailāsa mountain.

445. Thus, everything has been narrated to you, as to how that set of seven Liṅgas originated in the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara. It is destructive of all sins.

446. Any other man endowed with devotion who makes the gift of the Kulaparvatas in front of those Liṅgas shall attain Śiva.

447. If a man gets up early in the morning and looks at those Liṅgas, he shall be rid of the sin committed unwittingly.

448. He who makes the gift of these seven mountains in due order in front of their respective Liṅgas to Brāhmaṇas shall go to heaven.

449. For the period of a Kalpa, he enjoys the excellent Apsarās there and also divine pleasures. Then when he is born on the earth he becomes an emperor and monarch of all.

450. If a single mountain is gifted, sins are dispelled. If two mountains are gifted, one gets sons, grandsons and desired benefits.

451. Through three gifts one becomes a king and through four a Maṇḍaleśvara (Monarch of a Zone). Through five gifts, one becomes the master of Bharatakhanda.

452. Through six gifts one becomes the Lord of Janībūdvipa and through seven gifts an emperor. This is the outcome of gifting the mountains in accordance with injunctions. Pitāmaha said so.

453. A man shall always, in every birth, become an excellent Brāhmaṇa. Never is he miserable, poor or sick.

454. He will become endowed with conjugal felicity and happiness. His body shall be splendid. He will possess gems. He will be free from all enemies. He will subdue all the senses and become valorous.

455. Hence all, especially kings, shall assiduously make gifts of these mountains. They should keep their own deities in view.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYTWO

Characteristics of Different Yugas¹

The sages said:

1-7. Your Holiness earlier said that Lord Īśvara granted King Īśāna a span of life equal to a day of his own life. Do tell us what the magnitude of that day may be.

Sūta said:

I shall recount to you all the extent of that day of Maheśvara, O leading Brāhmaṇas.

May it be heard even as I speak out clearly: A fourth of a *Nimesa* is a *Truṭi*. Two *Nimesas* make one *Lava*. Two *Lavas* make one *Yava*, it is said. Fifteen *Yavas* make one *Kāṣṭhā*. They say, thirty *Kāṣṭhās* make one *Kalā*. A *Kṣaṇa* is considered to be constituted by thirty *Kalās*. A *Pala* is said to be made up to sixty *Kṣaṇas* and sixty *Palas* make one *Nāḍikā*. Two *Nāḍikās* make a *Muhūrta*, it is proclaimed. Learned men declare that a day and a night together contain thirty *Muhūrtas*. Thirty *Ahorātras* (day and night) make one *Māsa* (month). They know that a *Ṛtu* (season) contains two months. Three *Ṛtus* make one *Ayana* (Sun's transit) and two *Ayanas* make one year (*Vatsara*). The same is reiterated in the case of all men.

1. This topic is popular with Puranas. We find it dealt with in BhP XII.2, Kūrma I.29, Nārada I. 41. 1-123, to mention a few. There is a remarkable similarity (even textual) in the descriptions given in various Purāṇas.

8. Those who are conversant with the Purāṇas say that a *Vatsara* (year) of men is an *Ahorātra* of the Devas. The *Uttara* (Northern) *Ayana* is *Śukla* (White) and it is the day of the Devas. The *Dakṣiṇa* (Southern) *Ayana* is the night, disapproved for performing auspicious rites.

9. Just as a sleeping man does not indulge in enjoying pleasures, so also Devas do not accept shares in the Yajñas (in *Dakṣiṇāyana*).

10-11. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, calculating in this way, one million seven hundred twenty-eight thousand years according to human reckoning comprise *Īrtayuga*. During that period Viṣṇu who is Jagadguru (the preceptor of the universe) appeared white.

12. The people were bereft of sins. They were quiescent with full control over the limbs and the sense-organs fully conquered. All of them were long-lived and always engaged in austerities.

13. Just as a man takes birth so does he (normally) meet death. Seldom was the death of a son born seen by (their) fathers (i.e. son's death was never seen by fathers).

14. Lust, anger, covetousness, hypocrisy and rivalry were never seen in men in that Yuga, O excellent Brāhmaṇas.

15. Then follows the second one, Tretāyuga, O excellent sages. Then the terrible sin entered Dharma with a single foot.

16. Then Lord Madhusūdana turns red when a part of sin gets introduced, People become vitiated with jealousy and rivalry.

17. All people then performed Yajñas with the intention of proceeding to heaven. They performed Agniṣṭoma and many other Homas.

18. By means of their holy rites such as yajña etc., they go to the fourteen worlds of Devas (and others) starting with the first and ending with Brahmaloka.

19. Sons vitiated by rivalry, may be somewhat short-lived. But even so they never meet with death (before their fathers).

20. When father is alive (sons do not die). Lust, anger etc. may or may not occur but they are proclaimed to be of very slight defect.

21. Seeds sown once yielded excellent crops. Vaiśyas engaged in agriculture reap the harvest seven times.

22. All cows yield potfuls of milk. She-buffaloes yield four times that. Female camels yield four times more than that of buffaloes.

23. Goats and sheep yield one-fourth of the quantity (of cow's yield). Women also are so. (People) were richly endowed with the study of Vedas. They avoid *Pratigraha* (money, gifts). They were capable of cursing and blessing.

24. Kṣatriyas protected the earth with the Kṣātra Dharma (duties of a real Kṣatriya). No thief is seen and no adulterer can be seen. All the different castes were primarily engaged in their own duties.

25. This second excellent Yuga consisted of one million two hundred ninety-six thousand years.

26. Thereafter, comes the third, Dvāpara Yuga, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. There the sin has two feet and Dharma (Piety) too, the same. Lord Vāsudeva is tawny-coloured then.

27. It is proclaimed as comprising eight hundred sixty-four thousand years, O excellent Brāhmaṇas

28. Then lust, anger, delusion, covetousness, hypocrisy and rivalry—all these six bad qualities along with jealousy the seventh persist there.

29. Affected by these, human beings are antagonistic to one another and commit crimes. They do not attain heaven.

30. Even there a few are, of course, born quiescent, having mastery over their limbs and conquest of their sense-organs. Not all of them (are so), O excellent Brāhmaṇas, because there is the prevalence of sin in half of the space.

31. Then Kaliyuga is mentioned (as commenced). It is the fourth one and excessively terrible. Piety stands on one foot there and sin is stationed with three feet.

32. The Four-armed Lord turns black then. Even the single-foot of piety functions only now and then.

33-34a. Afterwards it perishes itself slowly. The span of the final Yuga is stated to be four hundred thirty-two thousand years.

34b-35a. All human beings, influenced by Kali and overpowered by attachment and hatred behave so mutually and with learned people.

35b-37a. In Kaliyuga, people befriend any person who has got ample wealth in the house and beautiful wives.

In the case of widows and all the ascetics and sages both the worlds will be ruined if the mind is not pure.

37b-38a. In Kali Age, even in rainy season, people are afflicted by famine. They wander with their eyes fixed to the sky.

38b-39a. A son thinks thus: 'If my father dies, I can become master of the house.' A kinsman thinks about a kinsman thus.

39b-40a. A daughter-in-law thinks thus in her mind: 'If mother-in-law dies, there shall be prosperity in the house; all the wealth shall remain with us; nothing will go elsewhere.'

40b. The Vedas are vitiated by the epics and secular poets. Sons are over-ruled by sons-in-law.

41. Kinsmen are over-ruled by brother-in-law. Ladies of noble birth are overwhelmed by unchaste ladies. Ascetics are afflicted by Śūdras. Śūdras become guides and directors of holy rites.

42. Śūdras begin to give advices to Brāhmaṇas. Clouds shower only very little rain. The earth yields very little crop.

43. Cows produce very little milk. Ghee (and fat-content) is but very little in milk. Brāhmaṇas eat everything indiscriminately. Kings are cruel. Vaiśyas are ashamed of agriculture. Śūdras become persons who make Brāhmaṇas run errands.

44. In Kaliyuga, kings very much like people who are engaged in disputations and obscene conversations.

45. Every tomorrow finds more and more sins. The earth has lost its youthful state. Auspiciousness has receded and terrible things have arrived.

46. As the Yuga advances and men and women grow in number they along with the ordinary creatures, become more and more despicable.

47. Girls begin to be united with husbands (i.e. married) in their twelfth year.

48. In their sixteenth year, men become grey-haired with receding youthful period. They abandon personal cleanliness and purity of conduct. They are devoted to selfish ends.

49. By the end of the Yuga, men will be reduced to the size of only the thumb. They will set up their abodes in rat-holes.

50. They will wear garments (of stuff) produced by worms.

All the castes will be reduced into one caste. All will become barbarians, evil in conduct and defilers of pious rites.

51. When the situation turns out to be thus, a Brāhmaṇa Haripiṅgala of Kalki Gotra will kill all.

52. Afterwards, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Kṛtayuga will appear once again.

53. A day of Brahmā will comprise one thousand such Yugas. A night (of the same duration) follows then.

54. According to this reckoning, three hundred sixty days of Brahmā make his year which is equal to one day of Keśava.

55. Brahmā lives a full life-span of one hundred years according to his own reckoning, Keśava also lives a hundred years according to his own reckoning.

56. A year of Vāsudeva constitutes a day of Maheśvara. He will also live a hundred years according to his own reckoning.

57. Then he will merge into Śakti form whereby he is glorified as *Akṣayī* (everlasting). A hundred years of Śiva constitute the Nihśvāsa (inspiration) of Sadāśiva. His *Ucchvāsa* (respiration) remains in the form of Śakti.

Sūta said:

58-59. Thus everything connected with Śiva and Śakti has been narrated to you and also the extent of human life. Earlier, O Brāhmaṇas, I was asked by you all about one day of Śaṅkara. But I have explained the same in regard to all including that of the mortals (human beings).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYTHREE

Reckoning of Yugas

Sūta said:

1-3. O Brāhmaṇas, a thousand *Caturyugas* (group of four Yugas) constitute one day of Brahmā. In that single day fourteen Thousand-eyed Ones (Indras) are born. The present Indra is the seventh one. In one day of Vidhi (Brahmā), there

are fourteen units of seventy-one *Samvartas* (Caturyugas). One Śakra reigns supreme for a period of seventy-one *Caturyugas*. So also in the case of Manus beginning with Svāyambhuva. These Manus and Śakras rule in the same way.

4-5. The Śakra who rules now is called Jayanta and the Manu is Vaivasvata Manu. In his reign, twenty-eighth unit of *Caturyugas* runs now (27 elapsed. 28th is current). When the present Śakra passes away, Bali will become Śakra with the favour of Vāsudeva.

6. He had promised this kingdom to Bali in the reign of the eighth Manu.

7. The same is the case of all other Suras. They are thirtythree crores in number. They remain in the same way as was in the earlier periods.

8. Eight years have gone by, O Brāhmaṇas, in the case of the Brāhmā who is the present creator and those too according to his own reckoning.

9. So also six months, one Pakṣa (i.e. Śukla, the bright fortnight) and half a day have also gone by.

The calculation of *Samvatsara* (year) is of four types based on *Saura*, *Sāvana*, *Cāndra* and *Ārkṣa* (Nakṣatra) reckoning.¹

10. In Kaliyuga all the living beings in the region of the earth pass away. The *Saura* (Solar) *Samvatsara* consists of three hundred sixty-five days. If it is less by five it is the *Sāvana* year (i.e. 360 days).

11. The *Cāndra* (lunar) *Samvatsara* is less by eleven days (354 days) and the *Uḍḍbhava* (Stellar) is less by thirty days (335 days).

The coolness of winter, the heat of summer, and the rainfall are based on *Saura* reckoning.

12-14. The outcome of fruits on trees, the harvesting stage of the plants, Agniṣṭoma and other Yajñas that are being conducted on the earth, festivals and marriages are based on the *Sāvana* reckoning.

Calculation of interests and dealings of professional activities are based on *Cāndra* reckoning with the intercalary month taken into consideration.

1. A *Saura* year consists of 365 days. It begins with Meṣa saṅkramaṇa. *Sāvana*-from *Savana* 'Pressing of Soma'. In Brāhmaṇa texts a year consisted of 360 days or 720 days and nights (see *Āitareya Brāhmaṇa* VII. 7).

The movements of the planets are calculated on the basis of the Nakṣatra (or Ārkṣa=stellar) reckoning.

15-17. Beyond these four types of reckoning there is no other type of calculation in the whole of the world. O excellent Brāhmaṇas. Devas, Daityas and human beings accept these reckonings. This is the eternal dictum of the Śruti.

If, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, anyone reads with devotion the extent of the Yugas before these seven Liṅgas, he will never have the fear of premature or accidental death.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYFOUR

Origin of Duḥṣīleśvara

Sūta said:

1-3. There is another Liṅga installed earlier by Durvāsas. It is the Liṅga of the three-eyed, noble-souled Lord of Devas.

O Brāhmaṇas, a person who in the month of Caitra undertakes to propitiate it (the Liṅga) with dancing, vocal and Instrumental music thrice a day, will be the king of Gandharvas with his favour.

The sages said:

Who is this sage named Durvāsas? By whom was Hara installed? O highly esteemed one, at what time was it installed? Mention everything in detail.

Sūta said:

4. Formerly, there was one Nimbāśuca in the excellent city Vaidīśa.

5-7. He was the head of a Maṭha and he worshipped a certain Liṅga. Whatever he got like clothes etc., he used to sell to devotees of Maheśvara. As the cost of those things, he used to take gold from those people. He never spent anything. He was engaged only in hoarding. After a long time, his cash-box became profusely filled with gold. O Brāhmaṇas, you know, he won very miserly.

8. He placed the cash-box under the ground and went on with his trading activities. He never left the room.

9. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, even for the worship of the Lord, he never trusted anyone. Nor did he leave his room.

10. In course of time, a Brāhmaṇa called Duśśīla who robbed others of their wealth, noticed that treasure, He thought:

11-13. 'To gain the confidence of this wicked-minded one, I shall become his disciple. With piteous utterances and flattering remarks of various kinds continuously spoken day and night, I shall contrive to make him idle.'

One day, he saw him seated in the middle of his Matha. He approached him and prostrated before him. With palms joined in reverence, he stood humbly and said:

14-19. "O holy Sir, today your power of penance was heard by me. In the whole of the world, there is no other sage like you; hence I have come here from a far-off place, because I am prompted by *Vairāgya* (absence of attachment to worldly pleasures).

I have realized that the worldly existence is worthless. What is it but a series of births, deaths and old age! It means that youthful days of men are nothing but evanescent dreams just like a river which originates from a great mountain. It is not permanent. Its power is momentary.

Sons, wives and other kinsmen—all these should be known as associations of sinful ones. Hence tell me something for the purpose of crossing the ocean of worldly existence.

Mention today some means of crossing this vast ocean; which is well founded in instructions, so that, O Brāhmaṇa of excellent holy rites, I can cross the sea of worldly entanglement with your favour."

20. On hearing his words, he (i.e. Nimbāśuca) became glad and experienced horripilation all over his body. He thought: 'Who may be this devotee of Maheśvara perpetually engaged in meditation who has come to me?' (and then said:)

21. "From what you say, it is evident that you are very blessed. Your intellect is such a fine one though you are still very young and so tender!

22. If a person, in the ~~prime~~ of youth is calm and quiescent, he is to be really called a tranquil man. Who does not

attain tranquillity when the primary secretions of the body become feeble?

23. If you have such a strong detachment with worldly pleasures, do propitiate Śaṅkara, the moon-crested Lord of Devas.

24. The ocean of worldly existence cannot be crossed otherwise, even through Japa of severe sort is resorted to. This has been well understood by me through my contact with (meditation and study of) scriptural texts.

25-26. One may be a Śūdra or a Brāhmaṇa, a barbarian or a sinner. If he gets initiated in Śivadīkṣā (Śaiva cult) and places a flower devoutly on the top of the Liṅga while reciting the six-syllabled Mantra, he attains that goal which even the performers of Yajñas do not attain.

27. If a man makes the gift of a garment, shoe or underwear devoutly to one endowed with Śivadīkṣā initiation, what has he to do with Yajñas?"

28. On hearing these words, Duḥśīla placed his head on his feet which he grasped firmly and uttered these words:

29. "O holy Lord, do me this favour of granting Śivadīkṣā, so that with great concentration, I can serve you everyday."

30-31a. Thereupon, O Brāhmaṇas, this ascetic thought in his mind: 'Some extraordinary man has come here. He appears to be very brilliant. I have no other disciple. Hence, I shall make him my pupil.'

31b-32. Then he caught hold of his hands and said: "If it is so, O dear one, enter into an agreement with me so that I can initiate you today itself. You should build your hut very far away from this Maṭha. Once the sun sets you should never enter this place."

Duḥśīla said:

33. O excellent one among ascetics, your command is authoritative to me. What shall I do with the Maṭha especially after nightfall?

34. If a disciple does not carry out the behest of the preceptor precisely as it is uttered, his holy vow (Vrata) is futile. Thereafter, he has to fall into Naraka.

35. On hearing those words, Nimbāśuca, the sage, became

pleased. He duly granted the initiation to that man who (appeared to be) endowed with humility.

36. Ever since then, he engaged himself in serving him and charmed his mind with his eagerness for service.

37. But he mentally pondered over his sole objective day by day. Though he watched very carefully, he could not see any loophole.

38. The devotee of Śiva (i.e. Nimbāśuca) never left that room nor the cash-box filled with gold to the brim even at the time of taking food or worshipping the Lord.

39-42. Then Duḥśīla thought thus in his mind: 'I have no access to the Maṭha at all during the night. At sunset the sinful fellow bolts it firmly in an instant. What can I do then?

This Maṭha is built with excellent stones. There is no question of digging it up. Since it is very tall, other means too will not facilitate entry.

Hence shall I administer poison to him or kill him with weapons? Shall I even during the day cause his death like that of an animal beaten to death?

43-45. Even as he continued to ponder thus, rainy season set in. It was the dark half of Śrāvaṇa. The sun was in Cancer. A devotee of Maheśvara, a rich man, came there in a hurry; bowed to him and loudly announced thus: "I will perform a holy rite on the fourteenth day, O Lord, if you grant me permission and come to my village gracing it with your benign presence."

Sūta said:

46. On hearing it, sage Nimbāśuca became glad. Saying "So it shall be", he immediately sent him back.

47. "I shall come at the proper time accompanied by my pupil. I shall do something very beneficial to you, O dear one, there is no doubt about it."

48. When the stipulated time arrived, the devotee of Śiva finished his morning routine and started in the morning itself accompanied by Duḥśīla. Throughout he experienced a great thrill with hair standing on their ends.

49. As he proceeded along his path, he came to the sacred river that falls into the sea. It was the well-known Muralā (Narmadā - De, p.134).

50. On seeing the river, he said these words: "Dear disciple, I shall in your company, perform the adoration of the Lord in Muralā itself. Be ready."

51-53. "Of course", he said and stayed behind on the excellent banks of the river. As for Nimbāśuca, he had already been favourably impressed by his good qualities. He thought him an excellent disciple and fully confided in him. He took the rags wherein the cash-box had been wrapped up and concealed along with Jāgeśvara Liṅga. He threw it down and went a short distance for the purpose of evacuating his bowels.

54. When he went out of sight behind a thicket surrounded by canes, Duḥśīla took up the cash-box and set off quickly towards the northern side. He was extremely pleased with himself.

55. When he (Nimbāśuca) returned he could not see Duḥśīla. Only the rag was seen with the Jageśvara Liṅga

56. He washed himself quickly and slightly. Uneasy in mind he did not perform the rite of *Ācamana* (ritualistic rinsing of the mouth) and returned to the place where the rag had been left

57. When he found out that the cash-box with his collection had been taken away by the disciple, he fell on the ground in swoon.

58. After regaining consciousness, he rose up with great difficulty and beat his limbs and head against the rock.

59. (He lamented:) "Alas, I am ruined! I am duped! I have been robbed by that evil-minded rogue. What shall I do? Where shall I go? How can I see him?"

60. On seeing his footprints he followed briskly but due to his old age he became tired. Hence he returned to his Maṭha.

61. Taking the cash-box Duḥśīla went to another place and practised trading activities with the gold he took.

62. He took a wife and had a life of a householder. He grew into an old man without any child.

63. Once, accompanied by his wife, the Brāhmaṇa went to Camatkārapura with a great interest in pilgrimage.

64. He wandered visiting all the shrines and taking his holy bath in all the Tirthas. The excellent sage named Durvāsas was seen by him.

65. With great devotion, he was engaged in dancing and singing in front of his deity. On seeing him the Brāhmaṇa bowed down and spoke these words

66. "By whom was this pure Liṅga of Śaṅkara installed? Why do you dance before it and indulge in singing? What you are doing does not befit sages."

Durvāsas said:

67. It was by me that this Linga of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas was installed. (I dance and sing) because Maheśvara is fond of dancing and singing

68. I do not have sufficient assets to make a befitting food offering to the idol.

69. In the meantime, a saint practising Yoga came there. His name was Cīrbhaṭi. Durvāsas was asked the following Vedāntic passage.

70. "Those worlds are devoid of the Sun. They are enveloped in blinding darkness. Those people who murder their own souls go over to them after death."

71. He then sat down and then clarified the passage. What he narrated was understood by Duḥśila too.

72. Thereupon, he got a deeper devotion for Hara generated in him. Bowing down to the Lord (i.e. Durvāsas) he spoke these words:

73-74. "O holy Sir, I am a Brāhmaṇa only by birth and not by my activities. Never have I given anyone any food to eat. Only through deceptive means, I have amassed a great deal of wealth of the deities and Brāhmaṇas, I am overcome by indulgence in vices such as dice (gambling) and harlots.

75. Though I am a Brāhmaṇa, I made a devotee of Śiva my preceptor. With many flattering remarks, he was deceived by me and his hoarded cash was looted.

76. The money thus looted was employed in legitimate means and made to increase. But that preceptor of mine has moved to the other world.

77. With this repentance I get scorched day and night. I wish to perform the rite of *Purāścaraṇa* and give away the wealth in charity. Hence do me this favour.

78. I have ample wealth, O leading sage, but no child. Hence, O sage, tell me how to make use of that wealth as

means of sacred welfare both here and hereafter. I shall do everything accordingly."

Durvāsa said:

79. After committing thousands of sins, one who becomes devoted to piety thereafter can cross the ocean of worldly existence (though) with great difficulty.

80. You adopted a Śaiva as your preceptor in (early) days. Thereby the *Guru* (preceptor) has become so even unrighteously. There is no doubt about it.

81. A Brāhmaṇa shall first become a celibate religious student, then a householder, thereafter a *Vānaprastha* (forest hermit) and a recluse, then a *Kuṭīra* (one dwelling in a hut).

82. Then, he becomes a Bahūdaka (one who bathes in many rivers), Thereafter a Hamsa and ultimately Paramahamsa.¹ Then he attains salvation by resorting to this path.

83. But you have followed a wrong path because though a Brāhmaṇa you adopted the path of a Śaiva. Thus a great sin has been committed.

Duṣṣīla said:

84. In all the Vedas, Rudra is glorified as the supreme Lord. Why then have you pointed out a defect in regard to his initiation (into Śaivism)?

Durvāsa said:

85. It is the truth that has been mentioned by you that Rudra is glorified in the Veda. Vāsudeva too is glorified on many occasions and Brahṁā also with special emphasis.

86-88. The Dikṣā pertaining to a Brāhmaṇa is based on institution of the sacred thread. The Gāyatrī Mantra should be used as the main Mantra for Japa and the *Guru* (preceptor) shall be one devoted to Vratas.

If any one adopts Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava Dikṣā, he shall not be a true Brāhmaṇa though he may have studied all the six Aṅgas. Another thing, in your fraudulent activities you have broken

1. These are the four categories of Sannyāsins.

Liṅgas because you have caused avoidance in Vratas. Hence you have no means of expiation. I have thought over it very well in accordance with the line of Smrtis.

Duḥśīla said:

89. Learned men say that friendship of good people is based on seven *Padas* (steps, words) (i.e. If some one walks along with another seven steps or speaks to him seven words, the friendship has been initiated). On the strength of such friendship, I am now saying something to you. Listen to it.

90. I have vast assets. If anything can be achieved thereby do tell me, O highly esteemed one; I shall do everything.

Durvāsas said:

91. There is only one way whereby your sin can be eliminated. If you perform it at my instance you will become pure.

92. They praise penance in Kṛtayuga, knowledge in Tretā, pilgrimage in Dvāpra and only Dāna in Kaliyuga.

93. Now, it is the time of Kali. It is current in its terrible form. Hence make a gift of Kṛṣṇājina (skin of black antelope) in order to wipe off all sins and gain purity.

94. Similarly, if you feel some compunctions about the preceptor's cash, then build an abode (shrine) of Śaṅkara in the name of the Guru.

95-96. In that case you will instantly become free from indebtedness to him also. If his wealth is put into use elsewhere, give that unto specially qualified Brāhmaṇas with great mental concentration. Always give a pot filled with gingelly seeds along with gold. Thereby all your sin will be expelled from your body.

97-98. Another thing, during the month of Caitra, I always come here devoutly from the far-off Kalpa (?Kalāpa) village to the palace here built by myself. Thereafter, I go. This is my Vrata.

99. Hence, with care you must look after this palace which has been built by me. It should be remembered always in the matters of ablution etc. in various ways.

Duḥṣīla said:

100. I shall carry out your instructions, O excellent sage, strictly as you say.

Durvāsa said:

101. O Brāhmana, after the antelope skin has been gifted away, give the vessels of gingelly seeds for the purification of secret sins. Thereby, all the sins shall be purified (dispelled).

Sūta said.

102. On hearing his words the noble soul gave devoutly antelope skin to a Brāhmana maintaining the sacred fires.

103-105. O Brāhmaṇas, at the bidding of Durvasas he did everything in accordance with the injunction. As he gifted the vessels filled with gingelly seeds everyday with great devotion, he became free from sins. So (the sage) granted him initiation into salvation and activities pertaining to it. After granting the initiation duly, he spoke to him sweetly "Give me the monetary fees due to a preceptor."

Duḥṣīla said:

106. O holy Sir, ask for any monetary gift quickly. If I have the capacity, I shall give it without any dishonesty in regard to my wealth.

Durvāsa said:

107. I shall go to Kalpa¹ village. Now it is Kali Age. I will never come here before the advent of Kṛta Age.

108. The palace that has been built by me is only half completed. You must see that it is completed. This is the monetary fee due to me as a preceptor.

109. The programme of dance, music etc. should be followed in accordance with your capacity. Oblations should be offered before the deity, viz. flowers etc.

1. The verse shows that 'Kalpa' to be probably the mythical Kalāpagrāma where the last scions of the solar and lunar race kings are waiting for the end of Kali Age. It is presumed to exist somewhere near Badrinātha in U.P. (De. p.84).

110. After saying this that leading sage went to Kalpa village. Duḥśīla did everything that he had suggested.

Sūta said:

111. Even as he did everything with great devotion that Brāhmaṇa named Duḥśīla is being glorified by that very name.

112. He who visits that Lord in the month of Caitra, is rid of his annual sin in an instant.

113-114. If anyone carries out the bathing rite etc., his sins arising in the course of thirty years are expelled from his body.

He who conducts dance and music programme before the deity, is rid of all the sins committed ever since his birth and upto the death. He shall attain salvation.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYFIVE

Nimbeśvara and Śākambharī

Sūta said:

1-4. Duḥśīla thus built the shrine of Śiva after the name of his preceptor i.e. it became well-known as Nimbeśvara. It was in the southern direction.

He did everything with great devotion and always remembered his lotus-like feet.

His wife had the name of Śākambharī. Durgā was installed by her after her own name. After these activities, they had some cash left with them which they gave over to Brāhmaṇas for conducting the worship of the deities. Thereafter, the couple ate and sustained themselves with alms.

5-8. After some time Duḥśīla passed away. Śākambharī took his body and entered the (sacred) fire, O tiger among kings, with unfaltering mind.

They got into an excellent aerial chariot attended upon by excellent celestial damsels, and went to heaven with hair standing on end due to great delight.

He who reads this excellent narrative pertaining to Duḥśīla becomes rid of all sins incurred by deeds unwittingly committed.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYSIX

Origin of Eleven Rudras

Sūta said:

1-2. Similarly, there are others too installed here viz the eleven rudras. They originated here, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, with a desire for the welfare of the sages.

If they are duly visited, worshipped, eulogized or bowed to by a man he becomes free from sins and relieved of all defects.

The sages said:

3. Only one Rudra is heard about (mentioned in the Veda) and no second one. His beloved wife is Gaurī and Skanda is glorified as his son.

4. Therefore, we know only one Rudra and none at all as Īśa (Almighty). Hence, O highly esteemed one, mention all these in detail.

Sūta said:

5. O highly esteemed ones, it is indeed the truth that has been cited. Rudra is one only. There is no second one at all.

6. But, I shall describe how these eleven Rudras originated. Listen with concentration.

7. Formerly, the sages of praiseworthy holy rites congregated together at Vārāṇasī. They were eager to visit Lord Hātakaśvara.

8-9. They made one agreement and started to reach there. They vied with one another saying, "I will view the Lord first. I will view the Lord first." Everyone wanted to be the first to visit Lord Hātakaśvara in Pātāla. "Whoever does not go at the outset and does not see the Lord shall alone bear the brunt of the sin of all arising out of the effort."

10. After saying thus they set out from Vārāṇasī running with very great speed.

11-14. In the meantime, the Lord named Hātakaśvara understood their intention to view him with very great devotion and their mutual rivalry too. He went out through a very

minute serpent-hole from Pātāla immediately. He assumed seven distinct forms having the same charming features, holding the trident, three-eyed and decorated with *Kaparda* (matted hairs). Each had the crescent moon as crest jewel and wore a garland of headless bodies. Lord Śaṅkara thus stood within their simultaneous view.

15. Then, on seeing the Bull-emblem'd One standing before, they knelt down on the ground and began to eulogize.

16. One of them thought, 'O, This Lord Mahādeva, the Lord of Devas, endearing to the devotees has appeared before me at the outset.'

17. Another thought, 'The excellent one among the ascetics appeared before me at the outset.' O excellent Brāhmaṇas, they knelt on the ground and eulogized:

The ascetics said:

18. Obeisance to the presiding deity of Devas. Obeisance to the quiescent one, to the subtle one. Obeisance to the Lord who split (killed) Andhaka.

19. Obeisance to all the Rudras who have occupied heaven always. They enliven the earth with the winds of diverse kinds.

20. Obeisance to all the Rudras who are stationed in the western quarters and protect all the worlds from the danger of the wicked-minded Piśācas.

21. Obeisance to all the Rudras who have resorted to the northern quarters and who protect all the worlds from the danger of the devouring goblins.

22. Obeisance to all the Rudras who have resorted to regions beneath and above and always protect all the worlds from the danger of the Kūṣmāṇḍas.

23. Obeisance to those numberless thousands of Rudras who have resorted to the earth. They protect us from ailments.

24. On being eulogized by the eleven ascetics, those eleven Rudras spoke to the ascetics who stood humbly with devout feelings:

The Rudras said:

25. I who have assumed eleven forms am pleased with your

excessive devotion, O excellent ascetics. Whatever is desired may be requested now:

The ascetics said:

26. If you are pleased with us, O Lord, if you are ready to grant what is desired, then you should stay here always in all those eleven forms.

27. Then we shall stay here in the auspicious holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara containing all the Tirthas. We shall continue to propitiate you.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

28. I shall stay here always in all these forms of eleven kinds assumed by me.

29. My original and primordial form shall resort to Kailāsa and stay always on the excellent mountain.

30. But these forms of mine shall stay here always, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, for the welfare of all the worlds.

31. Men shall take their holy ablution in the Viśvāmītra Hrada (whirlpool) and worship these forms of mine uttering your names in order, O Brāhmaṇas. They will attain the greatest goal, O Brāhmaṇas.

32. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, of what avail is the repeated utterance of many words? The adoration performed unto them shall have eleven times more benefit.

33. After saying thus the Three-eyed Lord vanished there itself. They too built their hermitages there. They were endowed with great faith. By propitiating those forms they attained the greatest region.

34. Any other man who propitiates them with faith goes to that greatest region where Lord Maheśvara is present.

35. Ever since then they became the eleven Rudras having the physical forms of Maheśvara, the Lord of Devas.

36. All of them united together are highly excellent in their refulgence. They are three-eyed and trident-armed.

Thus everything I have been asked, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, has been recounted to you.

37-38. I have explained how Maheśvara assumed the eleven forms.

He who devoutly adores them on the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of Caitra, attains the greatest goal. One who has no wealth attains wealth. One without a son shall beget sons.

39. A sick man shall be rid of ailments. A vanquished man shall meet with destruction of enemies. Through their propitiation alone one shall realize infinite desires.

40. Listen to the benefit obtained by one who propitiates them after being blessed with Śivadīkṣā (initiation) and becoming engaged in *Bhasma* (holy ash) bath.

41. He shall attain (in return to worship performed) with a single flower that benefit which another man attains as a result of adoration with the utterance of the six-syllabled Mantra.

42. He who practises Śivadīkṣā obtains hundred times more the benefit. A devoted Pāśupata obtains hundred times more benefit than a Śaiva. Kālamukha¹ obtains hundred times more benefit than the previous one and a Mahavaratadhara still hundred times more.

43. Those who are humble and worship those forms devoutly shall have hundred times more benefit.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYSEVEN

In Praise of Dāna Performed in front of Rudras

The sages said:

1. What are the names of those Brāhmaṇas who came from Vārāṇasī and due to whose great devotion, Rudra assumed the eleven forms? O great sage, narrate in detail their names.

Sūta said:

2. One of them is well-known all over the three worlds

1. A sect of Śaivism. For details see David N. Lorenson, *The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas*.

as Mṛgavyādha. The second one is called Sarva (Śarva?) and the third Nindita.

3. O excellent sages, the fourth one is called Mahāyaśāḥ. The fifth one is called Ajaikapāda, O excellent śages.

4. Ahirbudhnya is the sixth. Pinākin is the seventh. Parantapa is the other one (i.e. eighth). Dahana is the ninth one.

5. The tenth is mentioned as Īśvara and Kapālin is the last one. Hara gave the Rudras also the same names as they possessed.

The sages said:

6. Tell us quickly what Dānas are, recommended in their case. The *Japa* has been earlier mentioned by you. What is the procedure for carrying it out?

Sūta said:

7. O highly esteemed ones, cows are to be offered to them directly and separately in each case.

8. Cow made of jaggery should be directly given to Mṛgavyādha. That made of fresh butter should be given to Kapālin.

9. A cow made of ghee should be offered to Ajaikapāda and that made of gold to Ahirbudhnya. A cow made of salt should be offered to Pinākin.

10. O leading Brāhmaṇas, a cow made of *Rasa* (Juice) is to be offered to Parantapa. That made of cooked rice is assigned to Dahana and that of water to Īśvara.

11. O Brāhmaṇas, he who gives these to noble souls shall certainly become an emperor. Pitāmaha said thus.

12. They are beneficial if given to others too and still more so if they are given in the presence of Bhava. Hence by all means these should be given.

13. If one is unable to give many cows, one should give at least one cow to all the Rudras together in accordance with the words (opinion) of Bharṭṛyajña.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYEIGHT

The Legend of Yājñavalkya

Sūta said:

1-2. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the other shrines in the holy spot of Hāṭakeśvara are (those of) Bhāskaras (Sun-gods) installed by Yājñavalkya.

One who entertains something in his heart and devoutly worships them on Saptamī days (i.e. seventh lunar days) attains them. There is no doubt in it.

The sages said:

3. There is only one Sun to be seen in the sky. Then how are twelve suns installed in that holy spot? At what time and for what purpose were they installed, O Sūtanandana?

Sūta said:

4-5. Formerly there was a sage named Kṛti. He was the son of Śunaḥśepa. His son i.e. the grandson of Śunaḥśepa became a great sage. His son Cārāyaṇa also became an excellent sage.

6. Once upon a time, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, was completely burnt down (as it were) by a curse pronounced by Śāvitṛī. He took incarnation on the surface of the earth.

7. The curse was pronounced at the time when Gāyatrī was taken over as wife for the purpose of the Yajña rite, after rejecting (the wife) already he had. He did this in the assembly of all the Devas, thinking that there would be delay in the arrival of Śāvitṛī.

8. Then, at his bidding, Gāyatrī, the daughter of a cowherd, endowed with all divine characteristics, was brought by Śakra.

9. Knowing that she was the daughter of a cowherd, the Lotus-born Lord pressed her through the mouth of a cow and dragged her out through the anus.

10. There is a single family in the case of Brāhmaṇas and cows, only separated into two. The Mantras are stationed in

one (Brāhmaṇa) and the *Havis* (ghee for sacrificial oblation) in the other.

11. Thereby, she was made a Brāhmaṇa girl and Pitāmaha standing in front accepted her as his wife in accordance with the injunctions in the scriptures (*Gṛhya Sūtra*).

12. When she occupied the *Patni-Śālā* (the chamber intended for the wife of the performer of sacrifice), O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Sāvitrī too came there surrounded by the wives of Devas.

13. On seeing her (Gāyatrī) bedecked in sacrificial girdle, she became grief-stricken due to her loss of conjugal felicity. She then cursed Vidhi.

Sāvitrī said:

14. O Pitāmaha, though I am blemishless, I have been adandoned by you. Hence for the purpose of physical contact, you are only my grandfather (not worthy of contact).

15. It is the practice of human beings to take another woman as wife. Since you have done this, you will become a human being.

16. At my instance (curse), you shall undoubtedly be one afflicted by lust.

17. After saying this, Sāvitrī left the pavilion of the Yajña. She climbed on to the peak of a mountain and performed a great penance.

18. Due to that curse, after a long time, Pitāmaha was born into the household of Cārāyaṇa.

19. When he attained the prime of youth in his human life, he became afflicted by the distress born of lust.

20. He became proud due to his handsome features and he began to enjoy indiscriminately any woman he saw, be she a virgin or a sage girl.

21. On seeing him indulging in vice, sage Cārāyaṇa angrily banished him from his hermitage.

22. Abandoned by his father, he began to roam about here and there and ultimately came to the city of Camatkārapura to the place where Śākalya stayed.

23. That tiger among Brāhmaṇas was a Nāgara who had mastered the Vedas. He was surrounded by a thousand disciples and he propagated the Vedic lore.

24. He (Cārāyaṇa's son) devoutly bowed down to him and became his disciple. After a long time, he became a master of Vedic study.

25. In the meantime, the king of Ānarta came to the place himself where Hari was Jalaśāyin (lying in the water).

26. Before that deity, the holy rite of Cāturmāsya was adopted by him. O Brāhmaṇas, then Śākalya was requested by that king:

27. "As long as I stay here, kindly do me this favour. The rites of Śāntika and Pauṣtika (one for peace, the other for prosperity) should be performed by you in our abode."

28. He (Śākalya) said "Of course" out of courtesy, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. He then sent his disciples one by one to his (King's) abode.

29. Every disciple performed the Śāntika rite and blessed the king. Accepting the monetary gift, he used to return to the Brāhmaṇa (Preceptor).

30. The monetary gift was handed over to the preceptor Śākalya and the disciple went to his own abode. This became the regular practice.

31. On another day Yājñavalkya was despatched to the king's abode by Śākalya for performing the Śānti rite.

32. (On the previous night) the king's beautiful wife Mantharā, a charming damsel, was enjoyed by this over-passionate youth.

33. She had indulged in various amorous acts with him as elaborately prescribed by Vātsyāyana beginning with close embraces, infliction of marks with finger nails (and precious stones?) etc. in the form of peacock's foot on his lips and body.

34. (After the night-long escapade) the fellow came to Śākalya's presence for the daily lesson but he was immediately sent to the abode of the king for performing the Śānti rite.

35. On being sent there by him, the disciple went to the abode of the king and performed the Śāntika rite in accordance with the injunctions in scriptures, O Brāhmaṇas.

36-37. At the conclusion of the Śāntika rite, the disciple (Yājñavalkya) took the water pot where the water charged with the Rudra Mantras with five ancillaries had been poured. He took also raw rice grains and flowers and went to the place where Ānarta was performing the Vrata.

38-39. The disciple duly uttered the Mantra *dyāmālekhi* etc. along with the names of the sage and the Chandas. He was about to sprinkle the holy water over the head of the king, when the king observed that the fellow had nail-marks over his body and that his lips had been cut. This made the king unhappy.

40-42. The king clearly observed that the fellow with the defiled garments was a debauchee. He laughed loudly and said, "O Brāhmaṇa, pour the water and the raw rice grains over the stump seen in the stable." Yājñavalkya approached it angrily and poured there the water along with the raw rice grains. He went home without taking the monetary gift placed duly by the king.

43. In the meantime the stump of the Dhava tree had put forth sprouts. There were small branches of sprouts all round beautifying it.

44-46. On seeing it, the Ānarta king was wonder-struck. He regretted and said: "Fie upon me! I have committed this blunder. Indeed that was some divine being who had come here in the form of a Brāhmaṇa. The power of his Mantra is such as this! If only I had accepted the Mantra charged holy water I would have become one free from death and old age."

47. Even as the king thought thus with wonder and dismay, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, that single day became (i.e. was felt as long as) a hundred years.

48. The day was somehow passed by the king but the autumnal night appeared to be never-ending.

49. After daybreak the king got up and summoned Śākalya through trustworthy servants.

50-51. With humility and respect, the king stood with palms joined in reverence. He said: "O excellent Brāhmaṇa, yesterday one of your disciples had come to me for the *Śānti* rite. He should be sent today also. I feel drawn towards him with great devotion."

52. He promised "So it shall be" and returned to his abode. He spoke to Yājñavalkya in sweet words referring to the *Śānti* rite:

53. "O dear one, today also do go to the abode of the king. He has invited you specially again."

Yājñavalkya said:

54. O leading Brāhmaṇa, I will not go to his palace for the Śānti rite. I have been looked at with disrespect. My benediction was not accepted.

55. I poured the holy water etc. over the stump of a Dhava tree undoubtedly at his own instance. So, O preceptor, send some other clever disciple who may humour the king of Ānarta and bring some sense to him.

Śākalya said:

56. The command of the king should always be obeyed by persons living in the country, if only for one's own gain and for acquiring and preserving things (so) acquired.

57. He who is against kings is dull-witted. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, he will never have happiness.

58. Begging for alms has been laid down as atonement for those who do not serve kings due to haughtiness born of higher birth etc.

59. Even as the preceptor (Śākalya) and the disciple (Yājñavalkya) were arguing thus, the servants sent by the king once again came there.

60. In their hurry they said to Śākalya with palms joined in reverence: "Do send that disciple quickly. The king is waiting for him."

61. In spite of being repeatedly urged he did not go. Then he sent Uddālaka, the son of Āruṇi.

62-63. He was one of his humble (obedient) disciples and was (standing) by his side with palms joined in reverence. "Do go, O dear one, to the abode of the king at his bidding. After performing the Śāntika rite proceed with your self-study of the Vedas."

64. He promised "So it shall be" and went to the abode of the king. He then performed the Śāntika rite in accordance with the injunctions for the rites.

65. Taking the holy water in the pot along with raw rice grains and flowers, he came to the place where the king was seated.

The king said:

66. O Brāhmaṇa, give the ablution uttering the requisite Mantras unto the stump of the tree which is seen high up in front of you.

67. Then he uttered the Mantras and sprinkled the water over the stump. Then he went home.

68. He saw the stump of the tree as it was originally. King Ānarta became sad and he regretted (for his previous conduct).

69. The king thereupon sent another efficient messenger to the abode of Śākalya for the sake of fetching Yājñavalkya:

70-73. "O excellent Brahmana, there is pain all over my body. Send the disciple previously referred to quickly for the purpose of the *Śānti* rite.

O excellent Brāhmaṇa, yesterday he was insulted by me. That accounts for my sudden ailment, as I did not express my wish for benediction directly.

Hence send him quickly to me so that I can feel relief "

In spite of being urged repeatedly, Yājñavalkya did not go. So he said pleadingly to another disciple. Hence Madhuka Paṅḍya was sent to the royal abode.

74. What was performed by Uddālaka was performed by him too. According to the king's direction the benediction was offered to the stump of the tree.

75. On seeing the stump of the tree unchanged in form, the king once again sent another man for fetching Yājñavalkya.

76. In spite of being repeatedly asked to go Yājñavalkya would not go. Then he sent another disciple of many qualities.

77. It was Pracūḍa Bhāgavitti (Son of Bhagavitti). He too went there like the other two earlier ones and performed the *Śāntika* rite as done by them before.

78. Thereafter, he poured the holy water of the *Śāntika* rite over the wood with due utterance of the Mantra. Yet it remained unaltered from its original form.

79. Then the king himself with due regret for his earlier misdemeanour went to the abode of Śākalya for the purpose of inviting, Yājñavalkya.

80. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, he bowed down to the excellent Brāhmaṇa Śākalya (and said): "Instruct your disciple to

come to my palace in the morning for performing the *Śānti* rite so that, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, there shall be (restored) calmness and relief in my body."

81. Thereupon, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Śākalya said to Yājñavalkya once again even as the king Ānarta remained listening:

82. "O dear son Yājñavalkya, at my bidding do go quickly to the abode of the king and perform the *Śāntika* rite for the purpose of quelling the ailment of this king."

Yājñavalkya said:

83. I will not go there, O revered Sir. Do not tell me to do so. O venerable one, I have been insulted by the king.

84. On hearing his words (Śākalya) became extremely angry. Then he rebuked Yājñavalkya and said:

85-86. "If a preceptor imparts but a single syllable to a disciple, there is no such article on the earth by giving which he (disciple) can get redemption from the indebtedness to him.

Since, after being my disciple (for a long period) you do not carry out my instructions, I am going to subject you to my Brahma-Śāpa (Brāhmaṇa's curse)."

Yājñavalkya said:

87. O venerable Sir, if you are going to curse me unjustifiably, I will also curse you in return now.

88. He may be a preceptor but if he is haughty, does not know distinctly what should or should not be done and proceeds along the wrong path, it is laid down (in scriptures) that he be abandoned.

89. Hence you have been abandoned by me. You are no longer my preceptor since you pass orders to the disciple indiscriminately.

90. Within as many days as you have disciples here, I will either carry out your directions or else go away far off.

Śākalya said:

91. If you wish to go elsewhere then give up the knowledge

that I have taught you, O sinful, evil disciple. You can go thereafter.

92. Holy water has been charged with the Atharvaṇa Mantra, *kṣurikā muṇḍa* etc. by me. Drink it. By its power you will soon cast off from your belly the knowledge taught by me and acquired by you earlier.

93. After saying this he charged the holy water with the *Atharvaṇa Mantra*. The excellent Brāhmaṇa then gave it to the disciple so that he might vomit it out.

94. Yājñavalkya quaffed off the holy water charged by him with Mantras. He then vomited his lore along with the food taken in. He cast off the lore.

95. Thereupon, he became deluded and ignorant. He went to the holy Viśvāmitra Hrada and took his holy bath in accordance with the injunctions. He thus became clean and endowed with concentration.

96. He made twelve images of the twelve Ādityas, installed them and worshipped them devoutly.

97. The twelve Adityas are: Dhātā, Mitra, Aryamā, Śakra, Varuṇa, Sāmba, Bhaga, Vivasvān, Puṣan, the tenth one Savitr, the eleventh one Tvaṣṭṛ and the twelfth Viṣṇu.

98. The Sun-god was installed by the learned one in twelve forms. Then all the different Ādityas were propitiated by him everyday with sweet scents, flowers and unguents.

99. After a long time, Ravi appeared before him and said charming words to this sage:

100. "O Yājñavalkya, I am much delighted with you, O excellent Brāhmaṇa. I shall grant you what is desired. Tell me now whatever has been desired by you."

Yājñavalkya said:

101. If you wish to grant me a boon, engage me in the study of the Vedas. O Lord, therefore, I shall become your disciple now.

Āditya said:

102. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I have to be always moving about. It is to circumambulate the Meru, O Brāhmaṇa, and for the illumination of the whole world.

103. Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, how can I engage you in the study of the Vedas.

104-106. So become small in form and stay in the ear of my chief horse at my instance. Thereby, O highly esteemed one, you will not get singed by my refulgence. Settled there you can study.

He promised, "It shall be so" and entered the ear of the horse of the Sun. From there he learnt all the four Vedas from his mouth with their Aṅgas, Upāṅgas and the Pariśiṣṭas (appendices).

107. When it was concluded he said: "O Lord, say to me. I shall undoubtedly give you the fee due to the preceptor."

Āditya said:

108-109. You must propagate Sūktas of the Ṛgveda, Sāvanas of the Yajurved, Sāmans of the third and the *Kalpoktas* of the fourth, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. They all must be propagated with excellent exposition by you on the earth.

110. Those Brāhmaṇas who recite all of them before me will be relieved of sins. They will go to heaven.

111. Those who are devout and write further comments thereon, O Brāhmaṇa, will attain salvation. It is the truth that has been uttered by me.

Sūta said:

112. He learnt the Vedas, gave the *Gurudakṣiṇā* (fee in return for the study) to the Sun-god and returned once again to Camatkārapura.

113. He then approached Śākalya and said: "You have been my previous preceptor. O highly esteemed one, ask for *Gurudakṣiṇā*."

114. The elder brother, father, mother and preceptor, even if these are opposed to oneself, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, should be revered. There is no doubt about it.

115-116. All the four Vedas were learned by me along with their Aṅgas and Upāṅgas. Further the meanings of all of them were understood. Hence, O highly esteemed one, speak out what *Dakṣiṇā* should I offer to you?"

Śākalya said:

117-118. Whatever secrets of the Vedas have been imparted to you by the Sun-god recount them to me quickly. If they are learned and commented upon, sins can be dispelled. This is my Gurudakṣiṇā.

Yājñavalkya said:

119. So do come along with me to the place where the twelve Ādityas have been installed by me. I shall expound everything in their presence.

120. On hearing it, Śākalya went there along with his disciples and excellent Brāhmaṇas. He stood there where the Bhāskaras had been installed by him (Yājñavalkya).

121. Then standing before them, he narrated the commentary. He expounded all the Vedāntas¹ as told by Ravi earlier.

122. At the conclusion Yājñavalkya was propitiated by those Brāhmaṇas born in families following the four Vedas and conversant with the Vedānta.

123. He was requested: "It is due to your favour that we have become conversant with Vedānta and well learned in Vedic study. Ask for the *Gurudakṣiṇā*."

Yājñavalkya said:

124. My Gurudakṣiṇā is: Those Brāhmaṇas who expound the Vedas in front of these my Bhāskaras (i.e. Bhāskaras installed by me) should have access to heaven with your favour.

125. Those who are endowed with devotion and conduct discourses, shall attain the fourth region bereft of death and old age.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

126. In Kali Age, Brāhmaṇas will be ignorant. They will not be capable of even reciting, to say nothing of expounding, them.

1. Probably a reference to Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad.

127. Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, mention the essence (gist) of the Vedas. Thereby even ignorant persons can recite them.

Yājñavalkya said:

128-135. (His advice in brief:) The Brāhmaṇas of *Ṛk Śākhā* should recite at least these *Sūktas*, the *Sūkta* beginning with *ratham yuñjantr*: the *Sūkta* beginning with *Triṣṭubh*, that beginning with *citraṃ devānām* (RV. I. 115), *haṃsaḥ śuciṣat*, etc. and also the *Pāvamāna Sūkta* commonly recited by Bahvṛcas (persons conversant with many *Ṛk* Mantras).

Yajurvedins should recite these *Ṛk Sūktas*, *Sāmavedins* shall recite the twentyone *Sāmans* loved by Āditya. These shall be sung by those *Sāmagas* who are pure and stay here. Those who retain in memory the decisive meaning and eulogize Bhāskara will be able to pierce the solar disc.

Atharvapaṭhaka Brāhmaṇas who recite *Sūryakalpa* and *Sāntīkalpa* in *Ksurikāsamphuṭa*, will attain the greatest goal.

Even foolish (ignorant) persons should assemble together on Sunday and bow down to the Sun-god with great faith. Those Brāhmaṇas shall be relieved of the sins committed in the seven previous days and nights.

Sūta said:

136. When the Brāhmaṇas of the four Vedas promised saying, "So it shall be", Yājñavalkya became well-known to all of them.

137. The Videha king named Ratna (Janaka?) came there to listen to all the Vedāntas.

138. He too realized the greatness of the Sun-god, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, and installed him at that spot.

139. A man who visits that idol on a Sunday, shall be relieved of the sins committed the previous week.

140. Thus the greatness of the Sun-god has been narrated to you all. A man who listens to it with devotion shall get the merit of a horse sacrifice.

141. By listening to the excellent greatness, one gets that merit which one gets by making a gift on the Saṅkrānti day of the Sun or by listening to the same.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYNINE

Merit of Listening to the Purāṇa

Sūta said:

1-3. The whole of this Purāṇa was formerly narrated by Skanda to Bhṛṅgu. The son of Brahmā-Aṅgiras learnt it from him. Then Cyavana got it. Thereafter Sage Ṛcika got it. Thus this text was traditionally handed over to all in all the worlds. A man who listens to this *Skanda Purāṇa* retold formerly by Kumāra becomes redeemed from sins.

4. This *Purāṇa* is conducive to longevity. It is pleasing to people of all the Vārṇas. This is definitely composed by the noble-souled Six-faced Lord (Skanda).

5. It was thus that this narrative became famous formerly. Welfare unto you all.

6. No one can calculate adequately the merit of that man who listens to the greatness of the holy place of Hātakaśvara.

7. He who gifts this text describing the greatness of Dharma to a Brāhmaṇa, shall live in heaven for as many (Kalpas) as there are syllables therein.

8. Just as there is no limit to the number of drops of water in the streams of downpour, just as there is no limit of the number of sand particles in Gaṅgā, so also there is no limit to the merit thereof.

9. A man who devoutly listens to this or reads this story for some days, shall become one who has achieved everything.

10. A person who seeks a son gets sons; one who seeks wealth gets wealth; a woman who desires a husband gets a husband; and a girl gets a charming bridegroom.

11. By listening to the *Skandapurāṇa* kinsmen get united with those who have gone abroad; a man gets what is desired.

12. This scripture bestows all desired things on men, on one who listens and who reads. A king conquers the earth and rules over the enemies.

13. By listening to the meritorious Purāṇa, one gets long life. A Brāhmaṇa becomes conversant with the Vedas. A Kṣatriya obtains kingdom.

14. A Vaiśya gets wealth and foodgrains. A Śūdra attains

happiness. He who listens to even a fourth of a verse goes to the region of Viṣṇu.

15. If after listening to this *Purāṇa*, anyone adores the expounder, it is as good as the adoration of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra.

16. If a preceptor teaches at least a syllable to a disciple, there is no object in the whole of the earth by giving which, he can become free from indebtedness.

17. Hence Vyāsa (expounder of the *Purāṇa*) is to be adequately adored with cows, plots of land, gold, garments etc. and foodstuffs which all like, because he is the scriptural instructor.

18. He who is endowed with devotion, listens to the excellent scripture and adores the expounder shall attain the region of Śiva.

19. Only by listening to the *Purāṇa* the sin accumulated in the course of many births becomes quelled. He derives the benefit of all the Tīrthas.

:: End of Nāgara Khaṇḍa ::

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